

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick**

**Permanent WRAP URL:**

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/112822/>

**Copyright and reuse:**

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it.

Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: [wrap@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:wrap@warwick.ac.uk)

An inquiry into the development of intercultural  
learning in primary schools using applied  
Scriptural Reasoning principles

Anne Moseley

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of

Philosophy in Education

University of Warwick

Centre for Education Studies

June 2018

# Contents

Acknowledgement .....	11
Declaration .....	13
Abstract.....	14
1 Introduction.....	16
1.1 Introduction: Initial Motivation .....	16
1.2 Research Questions .....	17
1.3 The Importance of this Research .....	19
1.4 Chapter Overviews.....	20
1.5 Summary of the Research Conducted.....	22
2 Scriptural Reasoning.....	24
2.1 What is Scriptural Reasoning? .....	24
2.2 Scriptural Reasoning Beginnings.....	25
2.3 Scriptural Reasoning and its Theological Position.....	26
2.4 Scriptural Reasoning and its Philosophical Position.....	28
2.5 Principles of Scriptural Reasoning.....	31
2.5.1 Principle 1 - Learning and Understanding.....	32
2.5.2 Principle 2 - Exploring Differences .....	33

2.5.3	Principle 3 – Building Friendships.....	36
2.6	Using Scriptural Reasoning.....	39
2.7	Current Empirical Work.....	40
2.8	Summary.....	42
3	Religious Education and the Use of Sacred Texts .....	44
3.1	Sacred Texts – Past Use in Schools.....	44
3.2	Sacred Texts – Current Use in Schools .....	46
3.3	Sacred Texts - Current Reports and Findings .....	49
3.4	Sacred Texts – Developmental Issues.....	50
3.5	Sacred Texts – Religious Integrity .....	53
3.6	Religious Education and Narrativial Pedagogy .....	55
3.7	Religious Education and Dialogical Pedagogy .....	59
3.8	Religious Education and Interpretative pedagogy .....	63
3.9	Summary.....	63
4	Intercultural Communicative Competence .....	65
4.1	Introduction.....	65
4.2	Intercultural Communicative Competence .....	66
4.3	Historical Context in the UK .....	70
4.4	Religious Education and Intercultural Communicative Competence .....	74
4.5	Byram’s Model of ICC.....	76

4.6	Outline of Byram’s Model.....	76
4.7	Formative Influences .....	79
4.8	Developmental Issues .....	81
4.9	Intercultural Assessment Issues .....	84
4.10	Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters .....	86
4.11	Personal Experience with ICC in Primary Schools. ....	89
4.12	Summary.....	91
5	Methodology.....	92
5.1	Introduction.....	92
5.2	Methodological Position.....	93
5.3	Action Research Methodological Principles .....	95
5.3.1	Action Research Integrates Research and Action .....	96
5.3.2	Action Research is Conducted in Collaborative Partnership .....	97
5.3.3	Action Research is both Theoretical and Practical.....	99
5.3.4	Action Research Starts from a Vision of Social Transformation. ....	101
5.3.5	Action Research Requires a High Level of Reflexivity.....	101
5.3.6	Action Research Involves Engagement with Existing Knowledge.....	102
5.4	Action Research Design – Part 1 .....	103
	The Intervention – Synthesising Theory into Practice .....	103
5.5	Implementing the Intervention.....	107

5.5.1	Building a Team - School Participants .....	107
5.5.2	Building a Team - Faith Representatives .....	108
5.5.3	Before the Intervention - Pilot Scheme July 2015.....	110
5.5.4	Before the Intervention - Training for AR Team – July 2015 .....	110
5.5.5	Before the Intervention - Review of Current School Documents .....	111
5.5.6	AR1 – St Village School.....	111
5.5.7	AR2 – Smalltown Community School .....	112
5.5.8	AR3 – Middlecity Academy.....	113
5.6	The Story Tent Intervention.....	113
5.6.1	Introduction to the Day.....	114
5.6.2	Session 1 .....	114
5.6.3	Session 2 .....	115
5.6.4	Session 3 .....	116
5.6.5	Session 4 .....	117
5.7	Action Research Design -Part 2.....	117
	Story Tent Evaluation and Development .....	117
5.7.1	First Iteration .....	118
5.7.2	Second Iteration .....	119
5.8	Methods.....	120
5.8.1	Questionnaire.....	120

5.8.2	Pupil Reflexive Questionnaire .....	121
5.8.3	Observed Group Work.....	122
5.8.4	Semi-Structured Pupil Interview – AIE.....	122
5.8.5	Interviews – Team Observations .....	123
5.9	Development of a Coding Structure .....	124
5.10	Case Study – ICC Portfolio .....	133
5.11	Ethical Considerations.....	134
5.12	Summary.....	135
6	Findings from the Intervention.....	136
6.1	Introduction.....	136
6.2	Pilot Intervention.....	137
6.2.1	Setting.....	137
6.2.2	Trial Questionnaire .....	137
6.2.3	Trial Self-Assessment Sheet .....	138
6.2.4	Trial Reflections .....	139
6.2.5	Trial Adult Reflections .....	139
6.2.6	Data Collection Revisions .....	140
6.3	First Action Research Intervention – The Story of Noah.....	141
6.3.1	1AR1: First Intervention, St Village School .....	141
6.3.2	1AR2: First Intervention, Smalltown Community School.....	141

6.3.3	1AR3: First Intervention, Middlecity Academy .....	142
6.3.4	Data Analysis of Self-Assessment - Intervention 1.....	142
6.3.5	Data Analysis from Group Findings - Intervention 1 .....	144
6.3.6	Data Analysis from Adult Observations - Intervention 1 .....	148
6.3.7	Data Analysis from AIE Interviews - Intervention 1 .....	153
6.4	Second Action Research Intervention – The Story of Creation.....	156
6.4.1	2AR1: Second Intervention, St Village School .....	156
6.4.2	2AR2: Second Intervention, Smalltown Community School.....	157
6.4.3	2AR3: Second Intervention, Middlecity Academy .....	157
6.4.4	Data Analysis from Self-Assessment - Intervention 2.....	158
6.4.5	Data Analysis from Group Findings - Intervention 2.....	159
6.4.6	Data Analysis from Adult Observations - Intervention 2 .....	162
6.4.7	Data Analysis from AIE Interview - Intervention 2.....	169
6.4.8	Trends and Questions Coming out of the Data.....	171
6.5	Summary of Findings.....	172
6.5.1	Are some Intercultural Communicative Competence Linked?.....	172
6.5.2	What Part Does Personal Faith Have in ICC?.....	173
6.5.3	What Impact Does the School Ethos Have on ICC?.....	173
6.5.4	What Effect Does the Ability to Tolerate Ambiguity Have on ICC?.....	174
7	Findings from the AIE Interviews.....	175



7.1	Introduction.....	175
7.2	Attitudes - Valuing Others.....	175
7.2.1	Attitude of Respect (AR).....	176
7.2.2	Attitude of Openness (AO).....	176
7.2.3	Attitude of Curiosity (AC).....	183
7.3	Attitudes - Relativising Self.....	187
7.3.1	Tolerating Ambiguity (TA).....	187
7.3.2	Identity (Id).....	191
7.3.3	Empathy (EM).....	196
7.4	Communicative Awareness.....	199
7.4.1	Communicative Awareness Verbal (CAV).....	202
7.4.2	Communicative Awareness Non-verbal (CAN).....	206
7.4.3	Communicative Awareness Text (CAT).....	207
7.5	Discovery and Interaction.....	213
7.5.1	Technical Discoveries (DT).....	214
7.5.2	Practical Discoveries (DP).....	217
7.5.3	Emancipatory Discoveries (DE).....	218
7.6	Interpret and Relate.....	220
7.6.1	Explain (SE).....	221
7.6.2	Relate (SR).....	222

7.6.3	Interpret (SI) .....	224
7.7	Critical Cultural Awareness (CCA) .....	227
7.8	Research Team Reflections.....	229
7.9	Summary of Findings.....	232
8	A Discussion of Findings and Next Steps.....	235
8.1	Primary Findings.....	236
8.1.1	The Use of the Story Format was Important to the Success of the Intervention .....	236
8.1.2	SR's Style of Dialogue is Distinctive in its Ability to Promote ICC .....	239
8.1.3	The Use of Drama is a Powerful Motivator for Practising ICC .....	241
8.2	Secondary Findings .....	243
8.2.1	There is a Cognitive Hierarchy within the ICC, Relating to Skills .....	243
8.2.2	There is an Interactional Hierarchy within the ICC, Relating to Attitudes	246
8.2.3	Strong Religious Identity Correlates with both Low and High ICC.....	248
8.2.4	The Story Tent Intervention Provided a Meaningful Encounter for the Research Team as well as the Pupils.....	250
8.3	Summary of Findings.....	252
9	Conclusions.....	254
9.1	Strengths and Limitations of the Research. ....	254
9.2	Recommendations.....	256

9.2.1	Opportunities for Future Story Tent Interventions.....	256
9.2.2	Opportunities for Future Research.....	257
10	References .....	259
	Appendix A: Assessment Planning.....	268
	Appendix B: First Intervention: Sample Teaching Material .....	269
	Appendix C: First Intervention: Sample Self-Assessment. ....	274
	Appendix D: Second Intervention: Sample Sorting Activity.....	276
	Appendix E: AIE Structured Interview Outline .....	277
	Appendix F: Case study data information .....	283
	Appendix G: Lego Representation of Case Study Pupils .....	284
	Appendix H: AIE Transcript Coding.....	285
	Appendix I: Research Team.....	286
	Appendix J: Rules for Dialogue.....	287
	Appendix K: ICC Skills and Attitudes .....	287
	Appendix L: Ethical Approval.....	288

## Tables and Figures

Table 1 - Factors in Intercultural Communication (Byram, 1997: 34).....	77
Table 2 - Pyramid Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (as redrawn by Deardorff) (Deardorff, 2006: 254).....	85
Table 3 - Comparison of ICC outlined by Byram and Deardorff.....	86
Table 4 - Intercultural competences outlined in the AIE (Council of Europe, 2009).....	88
Table 5 – Action Research Team.....	109
Table 6 - First set of codes applied to the AIE interviews.....	126
Table 7- Second set of codes applied to the AIE interviews.....	129
Table 8 - Third set of codes applied to the AIE interviews.....	132
Table 9 – Self-assessment summary from 1AR.....	143
Table 10 - 1AR Coding data from group 3 session transcripts.....	145
Table 11 – 1AR Coding data from adult observation transcripts.....	149
Table 12 - 1AR Coding data from AIE transcripts.....	154
Table 13 – Self-assessment summary from 2AR.....	158
Table 14 - 2AR Coding data from group 3 session transcripts.....	159
Table 15 - 2AR Coding data from adult observation transcripts.....	162
Table 16 - 2AR Coding data from AIE transcripts.....	169
Table 17– Comparison between Bloom’s and Anderson’s Taxonomies, and ICC.....	245

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research would not have been possible without the help and support of many people and organisations. I would like to recognise and thank Culham St Gabriel's Trust and the Hockerill Foundation for their financial support of this research. I would like to thank my supervisor, Julia Ipgrave, for her guidance and support throughout this research project, and whose insights I have valued enormously both at a professional and personal level. I would also like to acknowledge the advice and work of Michael Hammond and all those at the Centre for Educational Studies. In addition, I would like to thank Jane Bates whose inspirational school leadership opened my eyes to the world of Intercultural Communication, and Sarah Snyder whose work with Scriptural Reasoning triggered the train of thought behind this research back in 2012.

I would especially like to thank the schools who were willing to open their doors and engage with the research process in such a positive way, and all the pupils who contributed so wholeheartedly and whose engagement led to many interesting new insights. Those adults who participated in the Action Research program in the various schools are deserving of particular thanks by name: Nadiya Takolia for her support in developing the teaching material; Angela Brodbeck for her faithful administrative support; Asima Iqbal, Hannah Skolnick, Habir Bal, Henry Mpako, and Bernardo Hernandez for sharing their stories and insights with the pupils; the class teachers Tracy Butcher, Ali McLester, Charlotte Stratton, and Aysha Sultana who provided unique insights into the teaching and learning process; and finally to Alison Struthers who acted as an outside observer. I have enjoyed working with these remarkable people and I am so thankful for their time and insights.

Most importantly, I would like to extend my thanks to friends and family who have supported me over the years. I am eternally grateful for the many unexpected encounters

I have had as a result of this research journey. I would like to recognise the contribution of Brian and Peggy Woolnough, my parents, who provided a home full of global visitors and outward looking perspectives and to my children Abbie and Ben Moseley who have encouraged and supported me over the past five years through this intensive process. Finally, my particular thanks go to my husband David Moseley who has always believed I was capable of doing this research and whose faithful, loving, patient support has encouraged me through to the finishing line.

Anne Moseley

June 2018

## **DECLARATION**

The work in this thesis was developed and conducted by the author between January 2013 and June 2018. I declare that, apart from work whose authors are explicitly acknowledged, this thesis and the materials contained in this thesis represent original work undertaken solely by the author. I confirm that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis explores the possibility of applying Scriptural Reasoning (SR) principles for promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) in primary schools. It used storytelling and interfaith dialogue to encourage pupils to exercise these competences in classroom settings.

It takes its philosophical position from the work of Ricoeur and combines a phenomenological and interpretive approach to Religious Education (RE) to develop pupils' understanding of both the "other" and the "self." From this theoretical position, an age-appropriate intervention was developed based on the principles of Scriptural Reasoning in collaboration with the Cambridge Interfaith Program (CIP). The resulting "Story Tent" themed day built on the established work of Julia Ipgrave's dialogic and Esther Reed's narrative approach to religious education.

The underpinning work utilised Action Research (AR) methodology through a cyclical approach which took place over two iterative cycles in three different schools, each with its own distinctively-different religious ethos and demographic make-up. It was unusual in combining the contributions not only of teachers and researcher but also faith representatives from local communities. Data was collected through pupil self-assessments, group work, and research team interviews during the Story Tent Intervention day. Follow-up interviews were completed with a selection of pupils using a semi-structured interview – The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounter (AIE). The data was combined to produce pupil case study portfolios. ATLAS.ti was used to support the coding process and analysis of the data.

The initial primary findings suggest that the genre of story; the pedagogic style of drama; and the process of interreligious dialogue were particularly effective approaches which



provided an environment where pupils and adults could explore and exercise intercultural communication. The secondary findings indicate that the skills and attitudinal competences outlined by Michael Byram seemed to lie within a hierarchy, both cognitively and interactionally. There was evidence which suggested that pupils with a strong sense of identity and were also able to tolerate ambiguity demonstrated a range of intercultural competences including critical cultural awareness. Finally, the personal religious identity of the pupils also had an impact on the pupils' responses to the encounters, which (in combination with other factors) could be associated with particularly positive or negative outcomes.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction: Initial Motivation

This thesis grew out of my experiences as a teacher of Religious Education in primary schools and my personal interest in interfaith dialogue. As a primary teacher I had been involved in developing a global citizenship (DCSF, 2007) curriculum in response to government requirements to promote social cohesion and global citizenship. As part of this development and with the support of the Bradford School Linking Network (Cowie and Henry, 2007) I developed an exchange partnership with a school from a neighbouring city. I was keen to explore whether this Intervention would enable the pupils to develop Intercultural Communicative Competence as outlined by the Council of Europe (Council of Europe, 2008). My Masters research investigated the impact of this partnership over the period of a year. Through analysis of their interviews, I became aware of the readiness of primary aged pupils to engage with and learn from those with different life experiences and backgrounds through the process of structured dialogue (Moseley, 2011).

I was also aware of new initiatives that had developed post 9/11 which promoted interfaith dialogue. I was particularly interested in the work that had been carried out by the Cambridge Interfaith Programme. They had developed methodological principles which used sacred texts as the focus for dialogue across different faith traditions. Whilst much of this interfaith work had taken place with adults at an academic level, I believed that my experience of teaching Religious Education demonstrated that primary pupils were able to explore different perspectives from comparative faith traditions when they were presented through stories.

This thesis draws together my experiences of using dialogue and story within the primary curriculum to create a new Intervention. It explores whether dialogue around faith stories can help children develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for communication across religious and cultural barriers – an ability based on Intercultural Communicative Competence.

## 1.2 Research Questions

My *research title* is “An inquiry into the development of intercultural learning in primary schools using applied Scriptural Reasoning principles”.

My *hypothesis* was that Intercultural Communicative Competence could be promoted in primary schools using faith stories delivered by faith representatives through applied Scriptural Reasoning practices.

My *aim* was to test this hypothesis through practical classroom research.

My *objectives* were:

- i) To develop and refine a teaching strategy Intervention that employed an age-appropriate adaptation of Scriptural Reasoning with a view to promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence among primary school children.
- ii) To measure Intercultural Communicative Competence displayed by the children during the Intervention against a model currently employed by the Council of Europe's education programmes.

I wanted the research to be based in practical applications of good classroom practice, but I also wanted to give the work a solid theoretical foundation in current academic research. Before the Intervention I developed a theoretical framework through a consideration of the first primary research question:

1) What are the possibilities for and challenges to the development of Scriptural Reasoning strategies for promoting Intercultural Communicative Competence?

I based my answers to this primary question on three sub-questions, which I explored through reviews of both current thinking and available literature:

1a) What is Scriptural Reasoning and how is it currently practised?

1b) What differences are there between Scriptural Reasoning approaches and the current use of religious stories in primary schools as taught in Religious Education?

1c) What synergy is there between Intercultural Communicative Competence and Scriptural Reasoning to support an exploration of this kind?

Once I had established my rationale, I selected Action Research for my research methodology and applied a two-part process to explore the following preliminary question:

2) How might Scriptural Reasoning practices be adapted to suit the experience, skills and cognitive levels of primary age pupils for them to exercise Intercultural Communicative Competence?

I addressed this question in two stages:

Part 1 – The initial theory was used to synthesise the “STORY TENT”

Intervention in collaboration with members of the Action Research team.

Part 2 – The Intervention was iteratively tested and refined in collaboration with teachers, faith representatives and pupils.

During the Intervention I applied two further sub-questions to develop deeper insights into how Scriptural Reasoning practices might be adapted to suit the experience, skills

and cognitive levels of primary age pupils for them to exercise Intercultural Communicative Competence.

2a) Which Intercultural Communicative Competences (if any) are being demonstrated during the Intervention?

2b) How does the Story Tent Intervention encourage (enable) pupils to exercise Intercultural Communicative Competence?

I considered these questions throughout both iterations of the story tent and across all three of the study schools. I will describe the findings from these activities in Chapters 6 and 7.

### **1.3 The Importance of this Research**

I believe this research is significant as it combines three areas of learning. It builds on the new and growing understanding of Intercultural Communicative Competence in a practical classroom setting. It applies the principles of the academic discipline of textual Scriptural Reasoning to the use of story with young learners. It does this by building on previous well-tested and applied pedagogic styles of teaching Religious Education in a multi-faith context. More specifically, I believe my research is creative and new in that it addresses four areas of learning in which little research has previously been published.

I related *interfaith* work to the demands of the *primary* curriculum.

I applied *authentic sacred texts* beyond the use of the Bible.

I used *faith representatives* to help scaffold the learning and develop *authentic interpretations*.

I adapted *participatory critical* Action Research methodology to create a *three-part* research team.

## 1.4 Chapter Overviews

Following this introduction, I will use Chapters 2, 3 and 4 to address the three initial sub-questions and present a literature review to explore the current understanding of Scriptural Reasoning (SR), Religious Education (RE) and Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) respectively. I will outline the Action Research (AR) methodology in Chapter 5 and discuss the findings from the data in Chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 8 draws together the findings that came out of the research and explores possible implications for future research opportunities. The final section draws together a summary of the findings and concluding remarks. Throughout the remainder of this thesis I will use abbreviations for the key research concepts as indicated above.

I will use Chapter 2 to discuss the origins of SR in the early 1990s using the work of Ochs and Ford (1998). I will place SR within a philosophical and theological position and I will also review the current practice of SR across different continents, building particularly on the work of the Cambridge Interfaith Programme. I will suggest a case for applying the philosophical position of Ricoeur (1992) to the practice of SR in so far as it combines a descriptive phenomenological approach to using sacred texts with an interpretative hermeneutical process. The Chapter will conclude by justifying the proposal that SR can be used in primary school pupils through the exploration of faith stories and the dialogical method of engagement.

In Chapter 3, I will present an overview of different approaches to RE which have made use of sacred texts in primary schools, both in the past and present. I will draw on the theoretical work of Smart (1978), Jackson (1997), Francis (1978), Ipgrave (2001), Copley (2005), and Freathy (2010). I will also apply my personal experience of teaching RE across school years YR to Y6: in the British school system this corresponds to ages four to eleven. I will argue that an adapted, age-appropriate application of SR practices could

build on the *phenomenological* and *interpretative* methods of religious education to deliver a new style of reading scriptures together across faith traditions.

Chapter 4 will provide an overview of the current understanding of ICC. I will draw parallels between the work carried out within the UK and the work of the Council of Europe over the last two decades. This will be based upon government and independent reports, and Council of Europe publications, targeting education and community cohesion. I will apply a wider review of the developing research in the field of ICC across different geographical contexts and highlight some of the complexities within the subject matter. I will also explore some of the theoretical positions of intergroup dynamics, particularly the work of Brewer's Intergroup Relations (Brewer, 2003), Tajfel's Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978) and Ting Toomey's Identity Negotiation Theory (Ting-Toomey, 2015). Finally, the research will be positioned within the European context using material from the Council of Europe; specifically, Byram's model of ICC which grew out of his teaching experiences of foreign language (Byram, 1997) and the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE) an application which developed theory into practical teaching materials and support the development of ICC (Council of Europe, 2009).

Chapter 5 will describe why AR methodology is particularly appropriate in preference to other possible research methodologies. The theoretical work of Lewin (1948) and Elliott (1991) was used alongside the curriculum development work of Stenhouse (1975) and the REDCo research project (Ipgrave et al., 2009) to guide the research design. I will discuss the development of the Story Tent Intervention in the light of the theoretical insights gained during the literature review. I will outline the methods used for data collection, through pupil self-assessments, observed group work, AIE interviews and

semi-structured interviews by members of the research team, and how these were analysed using ATLAS.ti and Excel.

In Chapter 6, I will survey the data collected during the Intervention and describe the findings from the research. This will be followed, in Chapter 7, by an analysis of the AIE interviews and a deeper study of the pupils' responses. This will enable a deeper exploration of the individual competences that the pupils were demonstrating, alongside the broader impact of the Intervention.

In Chapter 8, I will explore my findings in the light of the literature review and propose a selection of significant primary and secondary findings which came out of the research. I will also make concluding remarks about possible ways forward and implications for future research opportunities.

## **1.5 Summary of the Research Conducted**

This research presents the findings of a systematic investigation into the possibility of developing ICC in primary aged pupils, through the RE curriculum, using comparative faith stories. I carried out a theoretical exploration of existing research and applied this understanding to develop a practical, age-appropriate Intervention that was trialled and tested within the classroom setting.

The Intervention was delivered in three schools over two iterative cycles. A research team was brought together to deliver the Intervention that consisted of academics, RE teachers and community faith representatives. A total of eighty-seven pupils from three upper Key Stage Two (KS2), children aged nine to eleven years, participated in the research, which included questionnaires and self-assessments. The research team participated in evaluative interviews during the Intervention and a group of seventeen participating pupils also took part in post Intervention AIE interviews.



At the end of the study the data was further examined, an analysis was made of the findings and the results presented in the light of the literature review. Implications for further work are described, highlighting important questions meriting new investigation.

To conclude, this research offers insights into new pedagogic principles which have the potential to equip pupils with ICC required for civil dialogue and socially cohesive communities. This was achieved by building on past models of teaching RE in new and innovative ways, and through an honest use of dialogue around sacred texts with the support of a faith representative. The research is of interest to those involved in developing SR, RE and ICC at a theoretical level, and to professionals involved with primary religious education and AR methodology.

## 2 SCRIPTURAL REASONING

In Chapter 2 I will explore some of the *possibilities* for and *challenges* to the development of SR strategies for promoting ICC in primary pupils. I will start with a brief description of the practice of SR and review its theological roots. From this foundation, I will consider the underlying theories behind the process of encountering the “other” and position SR within a philosophical framework. This will be followed by a summary of the intended learning outcomes of SR in the light of current research and a reflection on peer examples of empirical work which demonstrate the possibility of using SR principles to develop intercultural communication.

### 2.1 What is Scriptural Reasoning?

SR is an approach to studying scriptures in interreligious encounters. Its focus is on developing an understanding of religion, as experienced by faith participants through shared dialogue around sacred texts. It is a practice where people of different faith traditions come together to share their sacred texts in an environment of mutual trust and respect. It is usual to have three different perspectives presented through the “*recitation*” or reading of a piece of scripture and a short personal explanation given by the reader to share their interpretation of the meanings embedded in the text. Participants do not need to be formally trained or academic: they act as representatives of a faith tradition with practical experience of faith. After the “*recitation*” the participants can discuss what they have heard in groups, usually 6-8 participants with, ideally, similar numbers of representatives from each of the different faith traditions. During this time, participants ask questions and share insights through the guidance of a group facilitator. For the founders of SR, the original intent was to investigate issues through an academic study of scriptures. As the practice developed it provided a space which transcended the

dualistic positions of either religious assimilation or confrontation to find a third approach which facilitated a mutual *critical engagement* through interreligious dialogue. It placed honest religious dialogue within the public sphere, which encouraged mutual understanding to address societal issues without compromise of beliefs. David Ford has highlighted its potential below:

*Secularised societies have generally failed to mobilise religious resources for public wisdom and for peace. Religions have often reacted against them, faced with a choice between assimilation or confrontation. But there is another possibility: mutually critical engagement among all the participants aimed at transforming the public sphere for the better. (Ford and Pecknold, 2006: 20)*

This approach extends respectful mutual criticality to the reading and interpretation of sacred texts, offering an opportunity for the authentic use of scriptures to be applied to issues facing communities and wider social institutions. It not only provides opportunities to compare beliefs but also, through the process of dialogue, to be challenged to review stereotypes and preconceptions of other faith positions.

## **2.2 Scriptural Reasoning Beginnings.**

SR is a practice which was originally developed in a Jewish academic context in a University setting. SR can trace its roots back to the academic work carried out on Textual Reasoning by Peter Ochs (1998). His use of scripture combined the approach of the Jewish rabbinic tradition with the pragmatic approach of Peirce (1992). Ochs original rationale drew on the work of Peirce who argued that truth exists in developing shared experiences of a changing world. Learning, he claimed, took place in the dynamic process of shared experiences and the shared realities of those experiences. Ochs combined the work of different academic disciplines to include philosophical and theological scholars to discuss and interpret important questions about Judaism in the Torah and the Tanakh.

In the following sections I will briefly review how these traditions have influenced the foundational principles of SR. Ochs' hermeneutics was not a rationalist textual analysis to determine objective meaning, yet neither was it a relativistic approach based on subjective personal insight: rather, it presented a middle way of mutual critical engagement.

### **2.3 Scriptural Reasoning and its Theological Position**

SR brought together a collegial approach from four stands of theological development that happened in the early 1990s. These were Jewish textual reasoning, Christian post-liberal text interpretation, a range of less text-based Christian philosophies and theologies, and a Muslim concern for the Quran and for Islam in relation to Western modernity. It was a point in time where there was a mutual desire among the Abrahamic traditions to learn from each other's religious heritage and apply their own faith interpretations to a changing world. To more fully understand the theological foundations of SR I will consider firstly the significance of utilising parallel texts as a basis for dialogue, and secondly reflect on the impact that each of the different faith traditions has had on the process of SR.

Within the Jewish faith tradition there has been a widely used rabbinic tradition known as "Chavruta" which involves the practice of reading the Talmud with another person; to study, analyse, discuss and debate a shared text. Through this textual reasoning process both participants learn from each other as each reader interprets the text and draws out meaning in relation to the other perspective. There is as described in Hebrew a "Miqra" or as Kepnes (Koshul and Kepnes, 2007) describes it a "calling out" of meaning. To read scripture together, to explore meaning appears to honour the traditions of the Jewish faith and was the underlying philosophical position.

In the mid-1990s SR became an interfaith encounter when those from a Christian tradition, notably David Ford from the Cambridge Interfaith Programme, became part of the discussion, and “Textual Reasoning” became “Scriptural Reasoning”. This seemed a natural extension especially in the light of Vatican 2 as the Catholic Church moved towards reconciliation both ecumenically from within the Christian tradition but also with those from other faiths. The study and interpretation of scripture within small groups has been a familiar part of the Christian tradition and matched well with the style of Textual Reasoning developed by Ochs. However, it was the inclusion of the Quran and the teachings of Islam that marked a significant change in focus.

*Scriptural Reasoning was relatively tame and acceptable when its practitioners read and interpreted the Torah and New Testament, but the movement really became bold and internationally significant when, around seven years ago, it started to include the study of Islamic texts. (Koshul and Kepnes, 2007: 119)*

Koshul provides evidence to explain why this was an appropriate extension. Through quotes from the Quran, insights from the historical context, and exploring the Islamic concept of “Iql” he argued that joint reading of scriptures with the Quran is an epistemologically valid practice. There are several references to the Torah and the Bible within the Quran, for example:

*And so, if you have misgivings about [the revealing of wisdom] what we have revealed to you, ask those who have been reading scriptures before your time [and you will find that] surely the truth has come to you from your lord. Be not then among hesitators. Ayah (10:94) (Koshul and Kepnes, 2007: 14)*

He discussed that at the time of writing the Quran, many of the followers were pre-literate and not able to read themselves and that Jews and Christians, as people of the book, would be available to inform and support their understanding. He also highlighted

the use of “Aql” (thinking or reasoning) which was used over 36 times in the Quran indicating that this, when properly used, will bless the interpreter with God’s signs in the world around them. This implied, that within the Quranic narrative there is the possibility of constructive dialogue with people of other faiths. It also opens the possibility of a three-part dialogue to facilitate what Ford has called “mutual grounds” on which a mutually enriching exchange can take place.

For some believers scripture is authoritative, with only one interpretation and one true meaning, whilst for others there exists the possibility of working out culturally relevant interpretations through the hermeneutic process. In SR the latter position is taken. The text is seen as an authoritative voice embedded in culture and tradition that can be interpreted in different ways, in different cultures, in different periods of time. The dialogue that takes place in SR seeks to help participants to come to a fuller understanding of different interpretations of text as worked out in the lives of practising believers, whilst respecting difference and engaging in an honest critique of beliefs and values. This recognition of religious diversity and the expansion of practice to be inclusive of different religious practices makes it accessible to all the participants.

## **2.4 Scriptural Reasoning and its Philosophical Position**

It is useful to consider the underlying philosophical position of SR since certain of these perspectives will later be seen to have a direct mapping to particular competences within ICC.

Whilst Ochs and Ford have positioned SR within the philosophical pragmatic paradigm, subsequent scholars have explored its application and practice within the phenomenological school of thought. Historically, pragmatists have looked for a “best fit” solution to interpret experiences, whilst phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl (1940) suggested that it was only possible to apply a scientific attitude to experience if we

“bracket out” all previous assumptions. Heidegger (1956) developed his thinking further and applied these principles to the exploration of what it means to be human. He suggested that, if we want to explore the question of being, we must look at ourselves from within. It is through the dynamic encounters of those from a different cultural background that new skills, attitudes and knowledge are developed together.

This phenomenological approach was the overarching topic of the peer reviewed Journal of Scriptural Reasoning (JSR) in June 2014 suggesting there has been much comparative investigation, but it is the work of Gavin Flood in “The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning” (Ford and Pecknold, 2006) that has crystallised most eloquently the applicability of phenomenology to SR. Flood described phenomenology in terms of the descriptive or static phenomenology (*beschreibende phänomenologie*) but also the dimension of explanatory or generic phenomenology (*erklärende phänomenologie*) that looked beyond the appearances themselves to the origins in which the appearances arise. He suggests these two dimensions of description and enquiry can and do sit well together. Flood argues that it is possible to apply these principles to SR through a hermeneutic phenomenology.

*We clearly need a descriptive phenomenology in order to clarify the relationship of scripture to community but we also need a second level phenomenology or hermeneutical phenomenology that is open to deeper questions of being and truth and the answers presented in scriptural traditions.*  
(Flood, 2006: 160)

This hermeneutical phenomenology suggested by Flood sits well within the philosophical position of Ricoeur (1992). He, like Husserl (1940), sees phenomenology as a descriptive task but unlike Husserl he suggests that it is not possible to “bracket out” previous knowledge completely.

Concurring with Heidegger (1949), Ricoeur recognised the importance of understanding the human condition through lived experiences but proposed that this was never fully understood and always mediated through a continuous process of interpretation. He argued that new knowledge was developed through an honest reflection based on a priori understanding, and that this understanding could be developed through a hermeneutical cycle. Each lived experience became open to new and refined insights, a process that was always beginning and never completed. The practice of describing experiences through the lens of interpretation will always, he suggests, be more complex than our descriptions can fully illuminate.

There is a strong case for positioning SR within the philosophical position of Ricoeur which has been linked by other professionals involved with teaching SR. Moyaert (2017), suggests that Ricoeur is best described as the philosopher of dialogue and describes how his work has influenced her approach to teaching SR within a higher education context. Ricoeur, she states, has argued that it is possible to hold in tension both traditional and innovative interpretations of text. This position was described by Kearney who argued a philosophical position which mediated between Gadamer's backward look at the hermeneutics of tradition with Habermas's forward look of communicative action.

*Tradition needs innovation in order to sustain itself as a living transmission of meaning capable of being reactive in its inaugural moments, while innovation needs tradition in order to make sense as a form of expression governed by rules. (Kearney, 2004: 6)*

Hermeneutical enquiry is for Ricoeur a way of giving a future to the past, whilst allowing the past into the future. SR aligns with this position in that it draws on the traditional discipline of hermeneutics which seeks to discern the meaning of the original author and does this in the light of the experience of faith worked out in community. According to Ricoeur interpretation is influenced, not only by the social and cultural contexts of the



reader but also the fact that there is surplus meaning hidden in the text which can be interpreted in more than one way. Consequently, different readers will develop different interpretations.

Ricoeur goes further to suggest that this process of interpretation is enhanced through a challenge to preconceived ideas and highlights the work of Freud and Nietzsche, along with Marx's critique of false consciousness, as "Masters of Suspicion" who challenge our perceptions and demand a critical analysis of our experiences in order to develop authentic meaning. This notion of critical hermeneutics also sits well with the principles of SR. It allows different text interpretations where consensus is not the desired outcome, rather an honest critical analysis of text interpretations as worked out within religious and cultural contexts. Heidegger, Ricoeur and Gadamer suggest that this process can be extended beyond the text to all forms of understanding and can be applied to the written and the spoken expressions of culture.

This philosophical position enables an understanding of scripture which builds on traditional meanings through innovative insights of believers, who seek to interpret their scriptures to be culturally relevant to a changing society. SR does this through the process of dialogue between participants from different faith traditions which add depth of understanding within a shared cultural setting. This shared understanding according to Gadamer (1975) enables a "Fusion of Horizons", which helps individuals to gain a deeper but not a perfect understanding.

## **2.5 Principles of Scriptural Reasoning**

There are three core principles of SR as outlined by the Cambridge Interfaith Programme (CIP, 2017). Each one will be considered in turn in the following section.

### 2.5.1 Principle 1 - Learning and Understanding

SR provides a space for participants to share knowledge and insights from their own faith tradition alongside hearing about other perspectives from different faith traditions.

*Participants learn more about other faith communities through what is often at their heart-scripture. In addition to a deep interfaith encounter, SR deepens peoples' understanding of their own scripture and wider tradition. This is because you read your text in the company of someone outside your tradition who may not have read your scripture before, and who sees it through very different lenses to your own. As a result of their questions and reflections, participants' relationships with their own scripture is enriched. (CIP, 2017)*

This approach to interfaith encounters builds understanding of the “other” through the process of dialogue. Martin Buber (1937), an influential thinker in early SR debates, distinguishes two types of encounter. The first type of encounter applies the attitude of objectification, described as “I-It”, which presents a single mono-logic voice to be heard with one true perspective to be understood. The second type of encounter applied a relational attitude described as “I-Thou”, which presents a dialogical position and assumes two or more voices presenting different perspectives. In these encounters he describes a third space which opens up a space of the “in-between” or place of meeting.

Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) also draws a distinction between these two different kinds of dialogue; the first he describes as the authoritative word which is either accepted or rejected, the second the persuasive word worked out together through dialogue or two way communication. He suggests that in this two-way process of dialogue as well as having another physically situated addressee opposite, there is a third or “super-addressee” who plays the part of a witness to what is being said. The “super-addressee” plays the part of an imagined perfect listener who is hearing perfectly and can help process understanding in the third “space of meaning”. This third space is significant in

the dialogical method of learning and understanding and is explored more in the following Chapters.

Moyaert (2017), an advocate for Scriptural Reasoning, suggests that it is important that in building relations across religious communities we avoid simply generating more knowledge about religious traditions. Rather she proposes we develop “linguists capable of religious translation”. This concept of religious translation opens up the possibility of developing the pedagogic styles and principles found in SR with those found in the linguistic translation as imbedded in Byram’s model and in the ICC curriculum.

### **2.5.2 Principle 2 - Exploring Differences**

SR is not about finding consensus: rather it is about finding ways to disagree well. It is this aspect of SR that is particularly useful in providing a context where pupils can explore the place of difference

*SR allows us not only to appreciate the many things which we share and have in common, but it also draws on differences and teaches participants to appreciate them. There is no pressure to come to an agreement or consensus, and differences and questions are as welcome as similarities and answers. SR may of course find common ground, but it can also be content to improve the quality of our disagreements. (CIP, 2017)*

Ochs suggests that western philosophy and modern culture have been rooted in a system that defines the world through binaries, a dualistic worldview that focuses on opposites: for example, hot and cold, black and white, you and me. Through this process of identifying particularities two problems emerge. Either the differences become exaggerated and polarised causing separation, or they can initiate a tendency towards universalism where the particularities are minimised and assimilated. Ochs (2006) suggests that there is a different way of thinking that builds on the work of Peirce (1931) and his “logic of relations.” These binary pairs are placed in relation within a context,

which provides a third dimension. A place where hot and cold can allow the concept of warm, black and white can allow the concept of grey.

Although this third-space thinking is an important descriptor for SR, I feel that Ochs' particular examples are not sufficient, since they invite an interpretation that the third space is one of compromise. I believe that a better illustration would have the encounter of black and white giving rise to a third space of colour, and the encounter of hot with cold leading to the third space of temperature. The third space is most helpfully one that encompasses difference and moves beyond it to some meta-descriptive quality.

The key issue, however, is that when these binaries are put into relationships then new ways of creative interpretation can be experienced together. This is what SR is about, exploring faith in relationship with others.

This place of third space translation or triologue is highlighted in the work of Kepnes (Koshul and Kepnes, 2007) who proposes that Islam, as the third monotheistic religion, shares a sense of self and other with both Judaism and Christianity. He builds his argument through an exegesis of the story of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac. In exploring the perspectives of the characters from different faith traditions, he points to the fact that in all three texts the story of the "other", the outsider, and the stranger is an important and necessary aspect to gain meaning from the story. In exploring these texts together, the tension between being "thou" and "we" can be seen worked out in the narrative. For example, Isaac and Ishmael in Genesis 25:9 are found together burying Abraham. Despite all their differences and painful histories, they can be both brothers grieving the loss of a father and yet fathers of different nations.

Burbules (1993) also places importance on the fact that in relational dialogue there needs to be a place where difference is respected and valued for what it brings to the learning process:

*Without differences to play against, learning itself is impossible. (Burbules, 1993, :26)*

Holding this difference in tension long enough for it to bring about change is often considered counter-intuitive. Much of the learning that takes place in schools is based on consensus and the building of a shared understanding. An individual may start with a hypothesis or idea about the way the world exists or is, but then through the process of dialogue with another may become aware of an antithesis or a different perspective.

In Hegelian philosophy it is the process of bringing these two ideas together that a new idea arises through the synthesis of the two ideas. This process seeks to create new truth from conflicting concepts. This is not what SR seeks to do. It is rather a process where the dynamics of difference can be explored through interreligious encounters where “interactive particularity”, allows a place for participants to be different from each other.

For honest engagement in SR which bridges difference, Moyaert (2017) identified that certain conditions were required. She highlighted the importance of hermeneutical openness and argued that this does not necessarily transform participants into liberal pluralists but rather positions them to engage in meaningful dialogue and recognise that there may be more than one perspective that could inform and add depth of meaning to what is currently being explored. To do this she suggests that participants should be willing to address their own stereotypes and prejudices and recognise the strangeness of their own religious identity. They need to be able to suspend judgement and allow themselves to consider the possibility that someone from another faith tradition could have insights that might deepen their own. Secondly, she highlighted that participants need to be able to bear witness to their own commitments and beliefs. For interreligious learning to take place participants need an understanding of their own personal faith position and to be able to articulate themselves to inform others. Thirdly she suggests that in this process of openness to other and commitment to own beliefs an ability to

become interreligious translators is possible. In the same way that it is possible to translate a different language she suggests it is possible to translate meaning from a different religion. Whilst those involved in language translation will always be most articulate in the first language and any translation will always be only partial she suggests that this could be transferable into the interreligious context.

For those who see their religious identity as tied to a particular outworking of religion, the approach of SR presents a challenge. For these individuals, religious plurality may seem to be a threat to a set of beliefs and lifestyle which has been spiritually enriching. A natural response is to withdraw into closed communities where the familiar is cherished and the foreign and unfamiliar rejected. Ricoeur calls this “the temptation of identity” or “la déraison identitaire” (Ricoeur, 2004: 81) He previously (Ricoeur, 1992) wrote that identity and alterity need not be contrary but rather they can be interconnected. He suggests that the “shortest route to knowing yourself is through the other.” Moyaert also recognises that through creating a shared narrative diversity and unity can be held together.

*We may construct several narratives about ourselves, told from several points of view that add deeper insights into the question who we are in relation to others. Narrative in this sense is not opposed to difference, change and otherness but rather weaves diversity and unity together.*  
(Moyaert, 2017: 82)

It is through these descriptive encounters that authentic representations of identity can be maintained whilst understanding another viewpoint. Through this type of dialogue deeper and richer insights can be gained as identity and alterity are held together.

### **2.5.3 Principle 3 – Building Friendships**

The process of SR embraces the concept of mutual hospitality where friendships can grow and develop. The first two principles of SR explore the possibility that as

participants talk together shared understanding can develop across lines of difference. This principle highlights the potential for challenging stereotypes and prejudiced perceptions.

*With time, as relationships between members of the group grow, traditional stereotypes of the 'other' are broken down, barriers are dismantled and at best, participants develop lasting friendships underpinned by an appreciation of difference as well as an understanding of common values. Deep and sometimes risky friendships develop across divides. Participants may, together, draw on the wisdom of their different traditions to deal with the practical issues their communities face and their ability to respond together is strengthened. (CIP, 2017)*

At the heart of SR encounters is the concept of the meeting place which provides an opportunity for shared hospitality. The space is not owned or inhabited by one group over another; rather it is a space where participants are both host and guest at the same time, a “tent of meeting”; a portable “safe space” which can become a spiritual centre to explore faith from different perspectives.

David Ford (2006) describes three different types of meeting places and aligns these with different types of religious encounter. The first, “house” he positioned as the homes of the faith traditions, place where faith was worked out alongside fellow believers: places such as Churches, Synagogues and Mosques. The second, “campus” he positioned as the shared ground where the sacred and religious coexist together, places such as universities, conference centres or public spaces such as hospitals. I would position schools within this category. The third, “tent” suggests a different kind of meeting place, which is temporary. It is an impermanent space so does not replace either the home or the campus, but rather offers the possibility of a third space where identities are not threatened but rather welcomed, possessing scriptural resonances of middle eastern hospitality.

*This “in-betweenness” is a significant metaphor in various ways for SR. It is concerned with what happens in the interpretive space between the three scriptures; in the social space between the mosque, church and synagogue; in the intellectual spaces between “house” and “campuses”, and between discipline on the campuses; in the religious and secular space between the houses and the various spheres and institutions of society; and in the spiritual space between the interpreters of scripture and God. (Ford and Pecknold, 2006: 12)*

This “in-between” space becomes an interpretative space where all are welcome, and all voices heard. A hospitable space where friendships are made through relaxed encounters. This concept of the tent as a place of meeting was instrumental in the concepts behind my development of the Story Tent Intervention. It will be discussed as part of the rationale behind the Intervention design in the methodology Chapter. It represents an outward expression of the inner working of translation central to the practice of SR.

The principle of building friendships and breaking down prejudice has been extensively researched over the last fifty years surrounding the work of Gordon Allport and his “Contact Theory” (Allport, 1954). I quote his work here as it was instrumental in the way I developed ICC during my MA research. I also recognise the growing influence his work has gained in recent years through an awareness of its relevance to social cohesion and of particular interest to this research, the “Shared Space” research project (NATRE, 2017) developed through NATRE and based at Bristol University. Contact theory promotes value in diversity and develops meaningful encounters in safe spaces where religious and cultural differences can be explored.

Allport believed that to break down prejudice, active interaction between groups was required. Since Allport first proposed his Contact Theory in 1954 there has been significant research into the impact of contact over a wide range of different populations. For example Cairns and Hewstone (2002) found that contact, particularly within



educational settings, was proving to be an effective way of breaking down sectarian prejudice in Ireland. However, Hewstone warned of the limitations of expecting too much from the intergroup contact theory and uses the example of the breakdown of the former state of Yugoslavia. In a country where people of different faiths had lived side by side without conflict for many years, this contact and mixing of communities did not stop the country descending very quickly into civil war in the 1990s.

For Allport it was important that certain conditions were met for contact to be significant. He states:

*Prejudice may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports and if it is the sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups. (Allport, 1954: 267)*

These conditions are met within the practice of SR and have been applied to the development of the Story Tent Intervention in the design phase.

## **2.6 Using Scriptural Reasoning**

The practice of SR is not trademarked and can be applied freely in different contexts; however, the name is owned by The Society for Scriptural Reasoning Inc (SSR). The practice of SR has been developed in many different contexts across the globe. Four regional areas have been established where the “form” of SR is being worked out in region-specific contexts. They are based in the UK and Europe (with a centre currently at the University of Cambridge), in North America (with a centre currently at the University of Virginia), in the Middle East (with a centre currently in the Sultanate of Oman in the offices of the Tasomah Journal), and in China (with a centre currently at

Minzu University). Each of these regional areas are responsible for developing their own expressions of SR. Ochs describes the process below:

*The “form” of Scriptural Reasoning is therefore displayed only in region-specific embodiments, but these embodiments display generalizable forms nonetheless. (Ochs, 2013: 201)*

Different culturally relevant forms of SR have evolved across the four regions. Each area has encouraged new expressions and development of SR practices and peer reviewed work can be found in the Journal of Scriptural Reasoning (JSR).

The Cambridge Interfaith Programme (CIP) have expanded the work of SR in the UK and Europe through several different projects. Summer School programmes have trained and equipped religious leaders from different faith communities across the world, giving them an understanding of SR principles and practices to take back to their communities. Participants have attended from communities affected by religion-related conflicts such as Nigeria, Palestine, Israel, Pakistan and India. Ready prepared resources are available through online “Text Packs” for use with those who wish to start their own groups and there is also an online SR community. Since my research is based within the UK it is to the CIP that I have turned for support.

## **2.7 Current Empirical Work**

Empirical research exploring the impact of SR has been carried out in different contexts. Miriam Kaye (2010) provides an interesting example of how these principles have been applied. In October 2010 the CIP commissioned a one-year Scriptural Reasoning Intervention with Muslims, Jews and Christians in Israeli hospitals. It grew out of a government initiative to help equip doctors and nurses with cultural competences, this being particularly relevant within the Israel/Palestine context. Through meeting together

and applying a personal interpretative framework they found an ease and freshness with the approach which enabled honest dialogue without a set agenda for peace-building.

*The study of the texts alongside each other yet on the terms of the religious believers as protagonists of their own faiths allowed for the presence of different interpretations to be exciting, and not competitive. (Kaye, 2010)*

In an area of the world which has experienced so much pain and conflict this study found that the process of meeting together regularly over the course of the year did breakdown prejudice and build more cohesive communities: the following comments highlight this outcome:

*What was great was that I was not expected to deal with all my issues with the Israeli Jews. I could go into that meeting with my suspicions, come out with suspicions, but the difference was that I was able to sit and talk with them and gradually erase the hatred I have been taught to feel. (Mahmud, (Muslim) age 25)*

and

*When she came in I thought we would have to talk about politics and peace and stuff like that. I just don't think I can do that with the Palestinians yet. I have a brother who was badly injured in a terrorist attack and I know that I would have just got too emotional and blocked up having to talk about that. It was good to speak about my religion and where I come from instead. (Eliraz, (Jewish) age 26)*

More recently the practice has been extended beyond the Abrahamic traditions to include Eastern religions, developed by Ruokanen, and Huawei, and reported by David Ford (2012). Ruokanen, and Huawei have carried out two studies in China and applied the principles to include the sacred texts of the Chinese traditions of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism alongside the canonical texts of Christianity (both Catholic

and Protestant) and Islam. Working with scholars, professionals and young students over a 10-month period between 2014 and 2015, they found participants experienced similar outcomes to those who focused solely on the Abrahamic traditions. Participants found they developed a deeper understanding of their own faith traditions as well as understanding more clearly other faith positions. It should be noted that the issue of religion in China is a sensitive one. However, this form of interreligious dialogue enabled a broad non-judgemental exploration of moral issues across different religious traditions. New initiatives within the public sphere amongst community groups have been explored. Although currently unpublished, Sarah Snyder of CIP has developed a programme for use in prisons and hospitals using stories and drama to present scripture from different faith traditions. The Three Faiths Forum have applied SR principles in secondary schools through its “Tools for Trialogue” workshops and Tom Greggs (2010) has applied the principles with Muslim and Christian youth workers at the University of Chester. This work however has not been extended into the primary school context. This observation prompted the initiation of this research thesis. I wanted to explore whether there might be a place in the RE curriculum to develop an age-appropriate form of SR. I was particularly keen to investigate whether this might help pupils to communicate across religious and cultural divisions.

## **2.8 Summary**

From the examples above, we can see SR has already been applied in religious and secular contexts with people of different faiths or none. It provides an environment where people are brought together to explore the significance of “difference” which is predicated on the good practice of ICC. It provides a safe space and a controlled

environment where successful outcomes require the use of critical engagement and therefore it provides a good training ground for an exploration into the possible development of ICC.

Religious education offers a natural place within the curriculum to explore ICC as the experience of religion is a key cultural marker of diversity. It explores what it means to be human and what makes one culture different from another. My intention is to develop an Intervention which utilises the religious education environment to develop ICC in a way which enhances its objectives and to develop a deeper understanding of religious scriptures and personal faith. The next Chapter explores the possibility of using sacred texts with primary school pupils to develop an age appropriate application of SR principles.

### **3 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE USE OF SACRED TEXTS**

In Chapter 3 I will begin to explore the possibility of applying SR principles to the teaching of RE in primary schools. This will commence with a discussion of the differences between the use of religious texts in primary schools, as taught in RE, and SR approaches. I will develop a literature review based on established empirical research in the field of religious education and my own personal experience as a primary teacher of RE. This will lead to the consideration of developmental issues and the appropriate use of sacred texts within primary schools. I will conclude by reviewing the current understanding surrounding the use of using religious stories and dialogue, to produce an adapted form of SR which could be used in secular school settings in the light of developments in religious education pedagogy.

#### **3.1 Sacred Texts – Past Use in Schools**

At the end of the nineteenth century the Bible was used in schools to promote moral character and Christian values through a confessional approach. The Education Act of 1944 introduced a requirement on schools to provide “Religious Instruction”. This was provided through a non-denominational approach in relation mainly to Christian and Biblical content. In the 1960’s and 70’s research completed by the likes of Harold Loukes (1961) and Ronald Goldman (1965) suggested that the Bible was too complex and should not be taught in schools and confessional approaches to the teaching of RE were largely discredited.

The Education Reform Act of 1988 replaced “Religious Instruction” with “Religious Education” and required schools to teach the principal world religions in Britain through a multi-faith approach that recognised the importance of the Christian faith tradition within the UK. This multi-faith approach to religious education was developed through

the establishment of Standing Advisory Councils (SACREs) in each of the local education authorities. Members were drawn from faith representatives, professional educators and teachers, and local authority representatives. Each LEA was tasked with providing support and advice to schools but more specifically to develop a locally-agreed syllabus which reflected the religious nature of the area.

Subsequent non-statutory guidance (QCA, 2004) and Government recommendations (DCSF, 2010) provided advice on the teaching of RE in schools. These reports suggested that religious education should provide a context from which pupils could explore cultures, beliefs and values at a local, national and global level with recommendations supporting the Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development of pupils and the social cohesion agenda. The non-statutory advice recommends an approach which builds on respect, challenging stereotypes and developing understanding.

*RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. (DCSF, 2010: 8)*

These principles are reflected in the practice of SR and highlight the possibility for extending the approach advanced by Ochs and Ford to the teaching of RE.

The RE Review (Religious Education Council, 2013) also offers advisory documentation on developing the role of religious education within the curriculum and, with over 60 religious organisations represented in the construction of the report, it holds significant insights. It suggests that:

*Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to*

*understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence. They learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ. (Religious Education Council, 2013: 14)*

This advice supports the approach I have taken in this research and sits well with the principles underlying SR. It highlights the place of dialogue in understanding another viewpoint and it does so through the interpretation of texts and sources of wisdom. It recognises the place of personal belief in religious encounters and promotes an environment of mutual respect towards those that hold different opinions. It also suggests that the skills of interpreting, understanding and evaluating are well-positioned in the RE curriculum and reflects the skills and competence-based approach of this research.

### **3.2 Sacred Texts – Current Use in Schools**

In recent years, different trends have had an impact on the way scripture has been presented in the RE curriculum. The changing nature of society and increased religious pluralism has challenged the predominant place of the Bible in schools. In response to the developing pluralistic nature of British Society the Swann Report (1985) recommended an approach which avoided either assimilation or polarizing of cultures, but rather highlighted the value of diversity which recognised the importance of building society through mutual respect.

*We consider that a multiracial society such as ours would in fact function most effectively and harmoniously on the basis of pluralism which enables, expects and encourages members of all ethnic groups, both minority and majority, to participate fully in shaping the society as a whole within a framework of commonly accepted values, practices and procedures, whilst also allowing*



*and, where necessary, assisting the ethnic minority communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within this common framework. (Swann, 1985: 5)*

This research recognises the importance of developing a pluralistic approach to using the Bible which places it alongside other scriptures from different faith traditions. It neither looks to assimilate belief to create a common shared interpretation or promote one understanding over another; rather, diversity is respected, and different voices heard for the mutual benefit of all.

The increased influence of the secular movement in religious education raised concerns about the possibility of indoctrination taking place if pupils studied the Bible in schools, arguing that they are texts that are only relevant to committed Christians. Copley (2004) argued that the Bible was relevant for all people of faith or no-faith and that the removal of the Bible from the RE curriculum reconstituted a form of secular indoctrination. This research takes the position of Copley that the study of scripture is relevant to all and can promote the development of pupils' theological assumptions irrespective of their personal faith position.

Pupil readiness to engage with the complex nature of scripture has been raised as an issue particularly through the work of Goldman (1965). There are many complex concepts that are difficult for young pupils to comprehend: issues such as Christian salvation or Buddhist enlightenment. This research does not seek to develop conceptual understanding or principles of belief, but rather to present opportunities for pupils to engage in meaningful, age-appropriate ways as part of a process of developing an understanding of faith. This pupil readiness is discussed in more detail later in this Chapter through an exploration of current teaching practice in religious education.

Superficial phenomenological approaches often applied to the teaching of sacred texts in primary RE have made them just one of several phenomena that accrue to faith

traditions. This research moves pupils to look inside the texts to explore first-hand the significance of scriptures for individuals of religious faith communities as worked out through the faith traditions they represent.

Whilst a multi-faith approach to religious education has encouraged an understanding of living faith positions, little research has been done into the use of sacred texts in primary schools beyond the Bible. I wanted to explore how these texts were experienced and interpreted by believers from within their own faith communities and present them in a way that could be experienced and interpreted by those outside of their faith communities.

Before embarking on the current research project, I carried out a small survey amongst local teachers to provide some background information pertinent to my thesis. The survey investigated how teachers used sacred texts in schools, and how they felt about using them. I was particularly interested to explore the place of comparative texts currently held within the RE curriculum. In my role as Acting RE Advisor in Warwickshire I was able to have access to RE teachers from a wide range of schools across the county. Questionnaires were completed by staff in 37 primary schools (some with a religious character but most without) from Warwickshire and central Birmingham in the autumn term of 2013. Ten Structured Follow-up Interviews were conducted in a Purposeful Sample of the schools early in 2014.

This initial inquiry suggested there was little cohesion in the approach to the use of faith stories in the different schools. A total of 65 stories from different faith traditions were used across the 37 participating schools. Some stories were favourites across many of the schools, the most popular being stories associated with Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Hanukah, Passover and the story of the life of Buddha; others were unrelated stories selected by individual schools which linked to cross-curricular themes.

Amongst the teachers there was an agreement that faith stories helped children to talk about their beliefs and develop cultural understanding, however finding good quality resources was a problem. RE specialists felt concerned about the lack of confidence in other members of staff in their schools and whilst most schools used Bibles confidently in both RE lessons and assemblies, there was a reluctance to use other sacred texts - specifically a sense of nervousness about using the Quran. Through this initial exploration I identified a need for teacher support and training in the use of sacred texts, but I also recognised an opportunity to use sacred texts to develop a wider cultural understanding.

### **3.3 Sacred Texts - Current Reports and Findings**

In 2013 Ofsted, the government schools' regulatory body, reported that achievement and teaching in RE was less than good in six out of ten schools. They inferred that this originated in weaknesses in teacher understanding of the subject, poor and fragmented curriculum planning, inefficient assessment and limited access to effective training. When reviewing the use of sacred texts, they found for example that:

*...Christian stories, particularly miracles, were often used to encourage pupils to reflect on their own experience without any opportunity to investigate the stories' significance within the religion itself. (Ofsted, 2013: 15)*

The following year in 2014 the Bible Society commissioned a nationwide YouGov study (Bible Society, 2014) which also explored how sacred texts and stories were being used. Their results, like mine, indicated a lack of use and confidence in teachers using sacred texts within the classroom. They found that out of the 308 KS2 pupils who took part in the survey, 67% had said they had experience with the Bible, 25% the Quran and 15% the Torah in the past year. The data gathered suggests a greater confidence in using the Bible compared with texts from other faith traditions. The survey also reported that 3 in

4 of the teachers felt that the education system had an important role to play in addressing interreligious and ethnic challenges, and yet few felt confident to do this.

From the findings of my initial research, the work of the Bible Society, and the Ofsted report it appears that there is a need for more support for teachers to engage with sacred texts from different faith traditions and that these texts have the potential to enable pupils to understand the significance of the stories within the religions themselves.

### **3.4 Sacred Texts – Developmental Issues**

Ronald Goldman (1965), an influential voice in the development of religious education, argued that young children were not developmentally ready for biblical study. He argued that a traditional bible-based RE was not an effective approach with younger pupils. In his application of Piagetian cognitive development stages to the study of religious thinking he hypothesised that it was not until pupils reached the stage of Formal Operations that they were ready to engage with biblical study. Before this stage, he argued that pupils' interpretations of text were likely to be literal and that they simply were not ready to experience the spiritual significance of the meanings embedded within the texts.

During my initial investigation, one issue that came out of the interviews was the problem of dealing with stories that have difficult and complex spiritual content. The Easter story was highlighted as particularly difficult to communicate in age-appropriate ways by several teachers, as was the violent nature of some Hindu stories. One of the teachers interviewed suggested that the crucifixion story could be described as promoting terrorist activities:

*Oh yes, the crucifixion is absolutely one because I feel very aware that we are explaining something in quite a lot of detail to children which is about ... almost terrorism. (SACS Interview –07072014)*

Some teachers felt that sacred texts required complex literary skills to fully understand the religious concepts required for a complete understanding of the texts:

*I wouldn't give the Bible per se entirely to a primary school child unless they showed particularly high levels of reading skills. (LCEPR Interview –17062014)*

These difficult stories and literary concerns raise issues about whether primary pupils are developmentally equipped to deal with the complex moral and cognitive issues presented in these texts.

Goldman's work has subsequently been challenged and called into question in two separate subsequent quantitative research studies by Peatling (1974) and Smith (1998). They reconsidered his original research and have raised serious questions about the stability and generalisability of his findings. Francis (2000) has also raised concerns about the biblical material Goldman employed suggesting that the results might have been distorted since a standard text of the Bible was not used.

Whilst there has been a wide recognition that there is a justification for using the bible with younger children, Goldman's ideas have prompted debate and held considerable influence in religious education developmental models.

Francis suggests that Goldman's "stages of thinking" could be better described as "styles of thinking". Through his work with Susan Loman, Francis has combined the work of Goldman (1965) and Hunt (1972) to produce a new instrument to distinguish ways in which pupils can respond to Biblical text. His model which suggests styles of thinking rather than stages of thinking unlocks the potential to consider working with scriptural

texts amongst pupils in KS2. Whereas Goldman may once have created scepticism over whether such an Intervention could be meaningful, Francis' work presents an interpretation which extends beyond Piagetian stages of cognition and could be adapted to suit younger pupils. The "Loman Index of Biblical Interpretation" suggests pupils will either turn to a literal acceptance, a symbolic acceptance or a rejection mode. The concept of "styles of thinking" rather than "stage of thinking" is a helpful approach to categorizing pupils' responses to encounters of scripture and is explored further in my analysis of pupils' interpretive responses to sacred texts.

Trevor Cooling (1994) has also questioned whether it is appropriate to expect younger pupils to engage in meaningful ways with the theological dimension of the Bible. He argues that there is a growing body of evidence to suggest that pupils can cope with quite difficult ideas as long as they are presented in ways that relate to the pupils' experiences. Citing the work of Margaret Donaldson (1978) and Brenda Watson (1993), his "Concept Cracking" pedagogy contains both a content-centred approach focused on biblical concepts and a child-centred approach which seeks to provide experiences that are relevant, meaningful and age appropriate.

Whilst there are arguments which question whether it is appropriate to use the Bible with younger pupils, I suggest that the use of stories as religious cultural expressions will enable pupils to connect with the sacred texts. The aim is not to engage with them as theological books to be understood, but rather to explore religious expressions of cultural identity as translated through their religious stories. This research investigates the development of ICC in cognitive and age appropriate ways through relevant pedagogies. The question of whether primary pupils are capable of this is part of the research investigation.

### 3.5 Sacred Texts – Religious Integrity

My initial exploration into schools before embarking on this research indicated significant differences in the way sacred texts were being used. During a visit to an Islamic School I was able to see how children took part in Islamic studies, Quranic studies and Arabic lessons alongside the national curriculum. Religious education here was taught from an Islamic faith-based perspective where personal spirituality was embedded in the curriculum. The Catholic school I visited used the Bible in a confessional way, class prayers were said during the day, assemblies were linked to the church weekly mass themes and part of the curriculum involved confirmation preparation. The Church of England schools I observed tended to be intentional about their use of the Bible and were more likely to have structures for developing an understanding of their meanings. The Community schools I observed were more inclined to use the Bible as a source of moral stories to promote school values as opposed to encouraging faith beliefs to be explored and understood.

A significant empirical research programme known as “The Biblos Project” (Copley et al., 2004, Copley et al., 2001, Copley, 1998) explored how the Bible was being used in secular schools. It undertook an extensive three-phase programme between the years of 1996-2004. From this research project, Copley raised concerns about the way God was being filtered out of the Biblical narrative by teachers who felt uncomfortable about the explicit religious nature of the Bible, preferring to use the stories as a way of promoting moral development. He raises the concern that:

*Secularisation of biblical narratives, which excludes God as the ‘hero’, does **not** constitute a non-indoctrinatory approach to the Bible but merely a new form of secular indoctrination.*

*(Copley et al., 2004: 19)*

This matched my own personal experience of interviewing in schools, where many teachers used stories to present moral outcomes.

Freathy and Aylward (2010) have also explored the use of the Bible in a school context. Their research focused on the difficulties experienced by young people in understanding the theology of Jesus. Through a semi-structured interview process they found there was perceived confusion between understanding information about Jesus and belief from within the faith tradition. For example, a student may know from reading the Christian Gospels that Jesus performed many miracles, they may also understand that for some Christians the miracles are a demonstration of the divine nature of Jesus. However, they may not understand what it is like to hold those beliefs, especially if they are in opposition to their own worldview.

Copley concludes from his research that the Bible is a text with relevance not only to committed Christians but also those from other faith backgrounds, and that school is an appropriate place to engage with these texts. He suggested that through engaging with the authentic content of the Bible, people from all faith backgrounds can learn about both their own beliefs and values and those of others.

This research assumes that the significance of the religious texts is not simply its narrative content, but rather the way in which it informs the worldview of the believer. Through the development of ICC pupils move towards an encounter with the “other” which enables them to understand more fully a different perspective. This Intervention seeks to use the texts alongside a believer to facilitate an encounter which does not necessitate the need to hold religious beliefs, but rather a willingness to explore what those beliefs are.



This is an important distinction to be recognised in the use of sacred texts in school contexts. I would argue that it places SR in a unique place as it provides an insider who is able to describe what it means to believe.

*Scriptural Reasoning follows the full arc of interpretation, with a guided tour of the strange world of the other by an informed insider that allows one to understand one's familiar world with renewed and renovated wisdom. (Kosbul and Kepnes, 2007: 5)*

This model of using the sacred text alongside a person of faith is central to the practice of SR and enables an insider guide to talk about their faith including their beliefs about God. God is not filtered out, neither is the personal experience of belief, concerns raised by both Copley and Freathy.

This desire to return to the original meanings and intended uses of religious material was also identified by Flood (1999) who argued for the case for a critical engagement with religious beliefs as promoted in SR. There is strong evidence to suggest that the Bible and other sacred texts could and should be part of the RE school curriculum in the sense that they are understood by their respective faith communities. Through encounters with people of faith, pupils can develop an understanding of the lived experience of the diversity of cultures around them. There is ample justification to believe that this is pedagogically feasible, even at KS2, and in the next Chapter I will explore the value of this in developing ICC.

### **3.6 Religious Education and Narratival Pedagogy**

In the section that follows, I will argue my position for the use of story in the primary school context as a vehicle for using sacred texts in an age appropriate-way. Stories are not only a central part of the primary curriculum but also surround us in everyday living: they engage our emotions and help us to create meaning in an enjoyable way. Igrave

(2012) in a recent piece of research found that faith stories were particularly well received in the primary schools.

*In interviews with children at different primary schools, the success of the teachers' efforts to generate an enthusiasm for books was evident, as in the case of the six-year old who exclaimed, 'I love books!', another who pronounced, 'I like people telling stories to me because it's really interesting', and a third who explained 'As you read [the book] it's like enjoying it, it's like you're really having fun reading it and you don't want to stop'. This pattern of engagement was observed in RE lessons with Biblical and other scriptural stories. It could be said that the text gathered an interpretive community around it as the children asked and answered questions about its content and meaning. (Ipgrave, 2012: 266)*

These findings encouraged me to see the potential for developing the practice of SR using story. Ipgrave's observations suggest that primary schools already provide a positive environment in which pupils can enjoy scripture reading and joint interpretation. This interpretive community begins to look a little like those created during SR encounters and presents the possibility of developing this further.

Around the same time the potential for using narrative in religious education had been explored and theorized by Reed (2013). In combining narrative philosophy with narrative theology, she and her team propose a narrational pedagogy which is built on two fundamental tenets:

*Firstly, drawing on Ricoeur, we suppose a narrative concept both of the self and of wider society, the latter of which is formed from the multiple, overlapping and at times contradictory stories of the people of which it comprises. This is our narrative philosophy, which is inclusive of all people irrespective of their religious or secular worldviews and which is therefore universal in scope and application.*

*Secondly, informed by this narrative philosophy, and in keeping with a narrative conceptualisation of all religious and secular worldviews, we suppose a narrative understanding of both the Christian community and of the biblical texts upon which that community is based. This is our narrative theology which is of relevance conceptually and analytically both to those within the Christian tradition and to those who, standing outside the tradition, enter into dialogue with it. (Reed et al., 2013: 299)*

This theoretical framework has been developed at Exeter University and applied to practical classroom teaching in a new approach to the teaching of RE, “*The RE-searchers*”. It provides an approach which promoted different styles of RE investigation and uses characters as age-appropriate symbolic representations of different methodological approaches to the RE enquiry. One of the characters “See the Story Suzie” engages with faith stories to help her understand how others see the world. It is based on a critical, dialogic and enquiry-led rationale and reflects the approach of the adult practice of SR.

Storytelling is a literary genre with which pupils are very familiar. They recognise that a classical story format consists of a beginning, a middle and an end, it has characters and a setting, a problem to be solved and a denouement which brings a conclusion to the story. But stories are also helpful when dealing with religious beliefs in that they suspend truth claims and allow an exploration of the implicit meanings. Mayer highlights this and suggests that:

*One of the most striking features of stories is that they have the same features and function in almost the same way whether we believe them to be “true” ie non-fiction or untrue ie fiction. (Mayer, 2014: 64)*

For some the stories of the Bible are literature, for others literal truth: in both cases it is possible for readers to draw meaning from the text. He goes on to suggest that:

*Our willingness to accept the premise of a story suggests that we evaluate the truth of narrative not in terms of direct correspondence with the real world, but in terms of its internal consistency and its conformity without general conceptions about the way the world works. (Mayer, 2014: 64)*

In the process of engaging with a story we are not so concerned to establish what is true and what is not true, we are more concerned to explore the truth-likeness of ideas and narratives or as Bruner suggests:

*We interpret stories by their verisimilitude, their “truth likeness” or more accurately their “lifelikeness”. (Bruner, 1990: 61)*

I would suggest that this dimension of the story structure makes it a particularly useful vehicle for pupils to explore differing perspectives. It allows different interpretations to exist alongside each other and enables pupils to discuss informally what they believe without having to take on the belief structure of a faith tradition. Whilst it may not be fully-possible for pupils to understand what it is like to be a person of another faith tradition, it may very well be possible to gain an empathetic insight into their belief system through sharing in engagement with a story.

Having suggested that stories are helpful in creating meaning for the individual, they can also hold meaning for communities. Ricoeur (1986) argues that collective narratives exceed the limits of individual imagination and extend to the communal. He suggests that as communities we are constantly in a process of developing a shared narrative that helps to define our culture.

Looking back to the recent research of Iprgrave (2012) we see evidence of primary pupils beginning to develop an understanding of the religious culture beyond the stories themselves.

*Some children were able to do this on a wider scale as they placed the stories within the narrative not just of the scriptural canon but that of the religious tradition to which those stories pertain and of a human story of which they themselves are part. (Ipgrave, 2012: 274)*

I would suggest that from the theoretical position of Reed et al and the observations of Ipgrave it is appropriate to consider the use of faith stories as a vehicle for developing intercultural and interreligious awareness.

### **3.7 Religious Education and Dialogical Pedagogy**

In this next section I explore how dialogue has been used in the teaching of RE and how it can be compared to the process taking place within the experience of SR. Vaughan argued for the potential for using SR in schools (Vaughan, 2015) and suggested that the educational philosopher Burbules (1993) holds considerable relevance. In the previous Chapter we encountered the work of Burbules who highlighted the importance of encountering difference. For Burbules, dialogue is described as an “inquiry” which consists of a group of participants working together to address a common issue or purpose to come to a shared understanding. The inclusivity and collaboration of members of the group is more important than consensus. He, like Wegerif (2012), argues for the importance of holding together a diversity of opinions to explore and develop meaning.

*A key philosophical feature is that from a dialogic perspective, difference is a necessary condition of meaning rather than something to be overcome. (Wegerif, 2012: 14)*

Learning through the process of dialogue stems back to the time of the Ancient Greeks. Socrates believed that wisdom and understanding were to be found within us, and the best way to realise this understanding was through structured conversation. He outlined two different styles of dialogue. The first he described as “dialectical”: this applied

structured, rational, systematic debate to explore an issue of truth and reach a shared consensus. It is this type of question and answer discourse that is widely used in law where a shared consensus of the truth is worked out together. The second he described as “dialogical”. This approach encourages an exploration through debate considering different possible interpretations.

The type of dialogue used in SR resonates more with this second style of dialogue, referred to as the “*Socratic Circle*” method. Through shared discussion and collaborative endeavour, the participants learn from each other whilst not making judgements about truth claims. The aim of the discussion is not for one side to win an argument as might be the case through a systematic debate, or to combine understanding to create new truths; but rather to come to a shared understanding of each other.

An early advocate for this type of interaction is Brenda Watson who applied an approach to religious education which encouraged an honest exploration of different beliefs through a process she described as a “Critical Affirmation.” She outlined a “four-fold openness” towards faith traditions that did not require a bracketing out of belief but allowed faith to enhance religious encounters:

*...openness to fresh evidence; openness to the experience of others; openness to the needs of others as people; and openness to the possibility that we can be deluded. (Watson, 1987: 44)*

For Watson it was possible to both affirm and confirm the value of a belief whilst still applying a critical judgement: being open was the attribute of importance. I propose that this “Critical Affirmation” can be aligned with the practice of SR as discussed in the previous Chapter.

A recent development built on a dialogical approach which is being widely used in primary schools can also be seen in the Philosophy for Children (P4C) programme. It

draws on pupils' beliefs and experiences to reflect on and debate some of life's most difficult questions.

*The underlying principle is for children and young people to experience rational and reasonable dialogue about things that matter to them and their teachers. All participants work together in a 'community of enquiry'. The aim for each child is not to win an argument but to become clearer, more accurate, less self-contradictory and more aware of other arguments and values before reaching a conclusion. (P4C, 2018)*

These approaches are based in the experience of faith but do not necessarily address completely the issues surrounding the interfaith dialogue on which SR is based.

Some may question whether interfaith dialogue is possible or even an appropriate thing to do in mainstream secular schools and argue that the place for interfaith dialogue should be within the faith communities outside of the school curriculum. There have been growing networks of charities developing this interfaith work in the public sphere. Organisations such as "The Feast", a Birmingham-based charity, engage in promoting interfaith dialogue through churches, mosques, schools and community engagement.

However, these types of initiatives have been also used within secular school settings. Since 2004, the "Building Bridges Project" has been delivering an interfaith dialogue project as part of an extra-curricular program within mainstream education in Australia. It was based on an interfaith, experiential, interpretive educational project that brings together secondary school pupils to discuss and share their faith. The effectiveness of this program has been the subject of recent research between the years of 2009 and 2012. (McCowan, 2017). The findings suggest that interfaith dialogue did promote religious literacy, challenged prejudice and stereotypes and encouraged social and community cohesion.

But it is the work of Ipgrave (2002) in her research on interfaith dialogue in an inner city primary schools in Leicester which is perhaps the most relevant to my own research. In it she highlights the potential that primary-age children to engage with difference through a faith-based project in a secular setting. She recognised:

*... the creativity of the children's religious thinking when their perspectives are brought into dialogical relationship with the viewpoints of others. (Ipgrave, 2002: 3)*

She has subsequently suggested that interfaith dialogue facilitates engagement with others holding different worldviews that require a process of translation, an idea that is reflected in Moyeart's work on SR and fits well with the notion of intercultural communication.

She states:

*"Paul Ricoeur's paradigm of translation and concept of 'linguistic hospitality' have useful relevance to inter faith dialogue (Ricoeur, 2006). He offers insights into the processes by which people, separated by language, culture and religion, come to relate to one another in understanding and hospitality. Those involved in inter faith dialogue are engaged in a task of translation, a necessary process if mutual understanding is to be achieved. The translator's task is not to produce a perfect translation, however, but to offer one that remains faithful and hospitable to both sides across the linguistic divide. (Ipgrave, 2015: 133)*

Whilst the Building Bridges project was based in a secondary school context and demonstrated outcomes in line with SR, Ipgrave's work suggests that similar outcomes might be possible within a primary school setting. This research considers the possibility of using interfaith dialogue to explore religious and cultural difference and develop Competence to communicate across the difference. There are few contexts in which primary pupils are systematically taught how to relate well across lines of cultural demarcation, this is one of the identified gaps that this research seeks to close.



### **3.8 Religious Education and Interpretative pedagogy**

In this Chapter I have explored a range of pedagogic styles and how these have related to the use of sacred text in the teaching of RE. In this final section I conclude by aligning this research with the Interpretive Approach of Jackson. This has been widely used and developed through the work of Warwick Religious Education Research Unit (WRERU) (Jackson, 1997, Jackson, 2004). Whilst Jackson recognises the many strengths of the Phenomenological approach widely popularised by Ninian Smart (1978) in the 1960s and '70s, he argued that their methodologies could not provide the basis for an approach to religious education that considered material from different cultural contexts authentically. He looked to the world of cultural anthropology or ethnography to develop an Interpretative Approach. This shift has led to an increasing focus on a theory of interpretation that could be grafted to phenomenology; an approach which he argued was in fact called for by phenomenology. Whilst sacred texts were not included much in his interpretative approach it sits well with both the philosophical position and practical outworking of SR which I outlined in the previous Chapter, combining *phenomenological description* with *hermeneutic interpretation*. This will be explored more in the next Chapter.

### **3.9 Summary**

In this Chapter I have presented a case for using sacred texts in primary schools and more specifically using the principles outlined in religious education pedagogy. SR has a track record of successfully engaging with adults to develop an understanding of faith through the sharing their scriptures. I have shown there is good reason to suggest that this could work with children if presented in an age appropriate way. The RE curriculum is a natural place to explore such a connection. My intention is to develop and assess an Intervention which uses sacred texts, authenticated by community faith representatives, based on dialogue, face-to-face engagement and the exploration of different perspectives.

Jackson (Jackson, 2014) has recently drawn attention to links between effective religious education pedagogy and ICC, challenging policymakers and teachers to undertake further research to evaluate potential benefits in this area. He specifically recommended AR methodology as a vehicle for developing deeper understanding of the processes involved in developing ICC through the RE curriculum.

*There is much scope for using Signposts, in conjunction with the recommendation, as a starting point for research and development, including action research projects on topics such as:*

*...receiving visitors into the school who can talk about their faith or philosophy to students.*

*(Jackson, 2014: 102)*

This PhD research fits well with Jackson's recommendations. Using both religious texts and faith representatives alongside each other draws together the best practices of Phenomenological, Interpretative and Dialogical religious education. In harnessing the work of the Council of Europe alongside the academic tradition of SR and the experience of religious education pedagogies I am exploring the possibilities of a new and dynamic approach which combines religious education with intercultural education to develop a strategy which will equip pupils to face the challenges of living well with difference in diverse democratic societies.

## 4 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

In Chapter 4 I consider what synergy there may be between ICC and SR to support an exploration of this kind. I will draw from the work of the ICC research community considering the impact of culture, identity and relationships, alongside my own personal experience as a primary school teacher. The Chapter will provide an overview of the historical developments from a British perspective and make links with developments in Europe. I will further explore the work of the Council of Europe and provide a detailed description of Byram's model of ICC. This forms the theoretical framework on which my research draws. The Chapter will conclude with a consideration of developmental and assessment issues surrounding ICC and a description of the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters, a semi-structured interview tool used within this research.

### 4.1 Introduction

In the 1950s and 60s Britain saw a rise in multi-culturalism where the migration of people opened a more interconnected world with disparate groups and different cultures becoming physically more connected. The technological advances since then have seen the world becoming even more interconnected; socially, economically and environmentally. This research seeks to explore how we can equip primary pupils to navigate these differences, build cohesive societies, learn to live well with diversity and to communicate across difference.

For the purposes of this research I have chosen to build on the UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education. They have defined three objectives for promoting Intercultural Education which are presented on their webpage and outlined below:

1. *Deepen the knowledge, understanding of and respect for other cultures;*

2. *Enable young people to learn more about their own culture, to deepen their cultural roots and to reaffirm their identity;*
  3. *Raise awareness of the need for international cooperation to tackle today's global problems.*
- (UNESCO, 2018)*

I have chosen this definition as it contains considerable synergy with the objectives promoted through SR. Both seek to develop an understanding of the “other” alongside a deepening understanding of the “self” through respectful engagement and cooperation with people of difference. Whilst the emphasis in these objectives is based in culture, religion frequently captures the core differentiators of culture and it is the encounters of faith in which ICC is often most deeply challenged.

## **4.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence**

One of the difficulties in defining ICC lies in the very nature of the cultural perspectives and worldviews the researchers hold themselves. Because much of the work on ICC has been developed in the American and European context, competences which may be assumed advantageous in one culture may not be so in an alternative culture. In many western societies there is an underlying worldview based on individualism. Trandis (1995) has identified countries such as Australia, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Canada and the USA as countries based on individualism. This worldview tends to draw cultural identity from an atomistic, discrete and individualistic ontological position and a reductionist epistemological position. However, in many eastern societies there is an underlying world view based on collectivism. Trandis (1995) has identified countries such as China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Ghana, Saudi Arabia and Mexico as countries from an underlying collectivist worldview position. Chen (Dai and Chen, 2014) suggests that this collectivist worldview draws its ontological position from holistic rather than atomistic ontology position and an interconnected rather than reductionist epistemology.

At the intersection of these two worldviews there can be layers of underlying cultural confusion. For example, Chen suggests that the ability to change communication behaviours from situation to situation may be considered skilful within a Chinese community yet inconsistent or dishonest in a western culture.

Even the simplest greeting in such intercultural encounters can cause confusion. For example, a western individualist may choose to greet with a handshake whilst an eastern collectivist may greet with a bow. Finding ways to navigate these cultural identities requires a certain amount of knowledge of cultural customs and behaviours. Intercultural communication requires an understanding of the macro level of encultured systems but also an understanding of how the micro level of culture is worked out at the personal level.

For the purposes of this research I will be using Ting-Toomey's (1999) definition of intercultural communication.

*The study of intercultural communication is about the study of cultural differences ... and about acquiring the conceptual tools and skills to manage such differences creatively. (Ting-Toomey, 1999: 3)*

Her wide experience in intercultural communication over the last three decades has led her to recognise some of the different components that together contribute to the formation of culture. She describes it as

*...a complex frame of reference that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols and meanings that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community. (Ting-Toomey, 1999: 10)*

Culture, she suggests, provides a sense of identity for those who participate within the community but also a sense of belonging and acceptance within a group. Whilst some

aspects are visible, such as artefacts and festivals, others are hidden. To understand another culture with any depth she argues that we need to explore their values and beliefs to begin to understand commonalities and shared humanity.

The impact of social interactions and the process of identity formation have been studied in different cultural contexts and have been the topic of various research projects across the world. Nwosu (2009) argues that in Africa the very nature of identity is viewed differently. He quotes an example of a traditional Xhosa saying: “a person is a person through a person”. This idea that identity is rooted in the collective rather than the individual has implications for the way groups relate to each other and communicate with each other.

For those studying ICC in an Arab context there are religious as well as cultural dimensions interwoven within their concept of identity. The outworking of Islam across Asia, Europe and Africa has demonstrated different cultural expressions. Zaharna (2009) draws attention to Muslim identities that are defined by relationships with God, with family, with the local community and the worldwide “Umma” or global community of Muslims. This relational aspect of religion builds on the cultural and individual identities. From the works of Nwosu and Zaharna it is possible to see that, within any cultural tradition, there are many complex issues at work which lead to internal similarities but also diversity.

Drawing on the work of Tajfel’s Social Identity Theory (1978), Ting-Toomey identified the tendency for individuals to display confirmation bias which assumes the best of in-group colleagues whilst assuming the worst of out-group contacts, to reinforce our positions and beliefs. In the formation of group identity, she suggested we allow ourselves grace for mistakes but tend to be far more judgemental of others. To manage these boundaries requires the ability to communicate and it is through these places of

dialogue that it is possible to challenge these preconceptions and prejudices, this is one of the stated aspirations of SR.

Ting-Toomey (2005) goes on to suggest a central part of developing ICC on a personal level is through identity negotiation. In her Identity Negotiation Theory (INT) she identifies *primary identities* based on culture, ethnicity, gender and personal aspects as well as *situational identities* based on roles, relationships, face-work and symbolic interaction identity. She proposed that social identity is both an individual- and group-based concept that is worked out in relation to others through social interaction. She argues that individual personal identity is arrived at through comparison with others and that social identity develops through intercultural encounters.

*Thus, each individual's composite identity has group membership, relational role, and individual self-reflexive implications. Individuals mostly acquire their composite identity through conditioning process, individual lived experiences, and repeated intergroup and interpersonal interaction experiences. (Ting-Toomey, 2015: 1)*

This raises the possibility for developing ICC through the process of dialogue across group encounters such as those experienced during SR. The concept of identity negotiation suggests the possibility for pupils to develop their sense of identity through regular encounters with members of groups which are perceived as different and highlights the importance of the self-reflexive process in intercultural encounters.

When working with models of ICC it is important to be aware of these complexities to avoid oversimplifications, to try to find culturally sensitive models of engagement and to be aware of the cultural worldview of the researcher. It is because of this cultural sensitivity that I have chosen to build my research within a European context with models that are culturally relevant to the research group.

### 4.3 Historical Context in the UK

In this research I draw on the work of Ted Cantle and his concept of “Interculturalism”. His work has been authoritative in developing “Community Cohesion” and redefining the concept of “Multiculturalism” into one of “Interculturalism”; a vision which promotes a culture of super-diversity across a global community. (Cantle, 2001, Cantle, 2005, Cantle, 2012). He has claimed that, whilst fifty years ago it might have been appropriate to consider society in terms of a plurality of cultures (distinct, bounded minority groups), a more current description would be more complex and diverse. He proposed that a new paradigm of Interculturalism was needed which promoted a culture of openness and encouraged encounters where communities could engage with the “other” through a process that recognised the tensions and conflicts associated with difference should be viewed as a necessary part of societal change. Rather than communities consisting of cultures living alongside each other he highlighted the need for cultures to be engaged in dialogue to build shared cohesive communities where different voices could exist in tension alongside each other. It is from this position that my research has developed.

The United Kingdom has had a long history of encounters with other cultures. From the time of the British Empire, through to the “Multi-Cultural Britain” of the late twentieth century it has recognised, although not always effectively applied, the importance of communication across cultures.

In 2001 it became evident that there were growing racial problems in several English cities particularly in the northern towns of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford. In the aftermath of the riots that took place across these northern cities the Ouseley report (Ouseley, 2001) commented on the deteriorating and fragmented communities in these cities along lines of race, culture and faith. Whilst challenges have been made against the



validity and rigour of the report (Alam, 2006) its findings have continued to have an impact on the debate surrounding these tensions.

The Cattle Report (Cattle, 2001) also highlighted growing issues of segregated communities and described different cultural groups as leading “parallel lives”. He argued that these separated communities were leading to inward looking and isolated groups with little social interaction fuelling mutual ignorance and fear. This report together with the Denham Report (Denham, 2001) raised important questions about how to challenge this breakdown in communication.

The concept of “Community Cohesion” grew as central government worked to produce guidance and support community engagement and dialogue, some of these specifically to be used in schools. In 2006 the Education and Inspections act introduced a duty on the governing bodies of state-maintained schools to promote social cohesion. Community cohesion became part of the required school curriculum with advice in the document “Guidance on the duty to promote social cohesion”. (DCFS, 2007).

Alongside these changing attitudes several professional organisations were developing support material for schools. Organisations such as the British Council (British Council), the Bradford School Linking Programme (Network) and the Three Faiths Forum (3FF) were developing practical initiatives and curriculum materials to promote and develop this work. The Council of Europe recommended further guidelines for schools to promote social cohesion and highlighted the role schools had in teaching and equipping pupils to become intercultural communicators.

Whilst much of the subsequent work endorsed building cohesive communities the term community cohesion has become contentious in recent years. Joyce Miller, an officer from the Religious Education Council, argues that there were many positive aspects of community cohesion such as a new interest in identity, an increased awareness in the

value of communities and the recognition of the part religion must play in public life.

However, she suggests there were flawed dimensions to the concept.

*Community Cohesion has focused on social 'bridging' rather than social 'bonding' and so it focuses on the perceived separation that exists rather than the strengths that lie within communities. There has also been a tendency to look on some communities (particularly Muslim communities) as inherently problematic. (Miller, 2012: 5)*

She argues that, by highlighting differences rather than building on shared values there was potential to damage the very communities they were trying to support.

More recently schools have seen a government-directed move away from the social cohesion agenda and towards an emphasis on British Values within the curriculum.

In 2014 the Department for Education produced guidance for Promoting Fundamental British Values through SMSC (DfE, 2014) This non-statutory guidance emphasised the importance of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Alongside these developments within the UK, the Council of Europe have had significant influence in developing cross-cultural communication in the wider context of Europe. Originally convened in 1949, the Council of Europe was set up to oversee the reconstruction of post-war Europe. It now consists of 47-member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. Representative from across Europe have gathered together to share insights from different educational positions. Byram from the foreign language teaching community and Jackson from the religious education community being two influential voices from the UK within this community. The next section reviews some of the European work and influential papers.

In 2002 the Council of Europe released the Maastricht Global Education Declaration. It highlighted some of the challenges and opportunities a more globalized and

interconnected world presented and recommended that schools had a role in the development of global citizens.

*All citizens need knowledge and skills to understand, participate in and interact critically with our global society as empowered global citizens. This poses fundamental challenges for all areas of life including education. (Global Education Declaration, 2002: 3)*

The Council of Europe made further recommendations for schools which highlighted the significant role they could have in the promotion of social cohesion and in equipping pupils to become intercultural communicators.

A significant turning point came in 2008 through the advice given to policy makers which came out of the white paper “Living Together as Equals with Dignity” (Council of Europe, 2008). It recognised the importance of dialogue in combating prejudice, discrimination and intolerance.

*Intercultural dialogue is a necessity for our times. In an increasingly diverse and insecure world, we need to talk across ethnic, religious, linguistic and national dividing lines to secure social cohesion and prevent conflicts. (Council of Europe, 2008: 6)*

Over the last 20 years much of its work at school level has focused on human rights education, democratic citizenship and intercultural education. Support material has been developed to encourage schools to incorporate intercultural dialogue and global citizenship within the curriculum from Keast (2007) through to Huber (Council of Europe, 2014). Whilst this research does not directly address the issues of human rights or democracy, it builds on the principle that intercultural dialogue can be a significant way to facilitate respectful encounters with those of different faiths and beliefs.

More recently between 2014 and 2017, the Council of Europe have worked on a project to combine existing models of ICC to develop a joint conceptual model for global

citizenship within democratic societies (Council of Europe, 2016). The model was designed through an analysis and audit of 101 different ICC schemes used across Europe. Through a careful decomposition of the individual components, 20 competences were selected for inclusion in the model and divided into 4 sections: values, skills, attitudes and knowledge. This model recognises the key role educators have in teaching these competences and acts as a guidance document for policy makers and educators.

Whilst this model was not available at the time of my original research design, it will be useful to consider it in my final reflections. I would argue that Byram's intercultural model and the AIE interview continue to be relevant since the work has been widely used and tested with pupils in classrooms and Michael Byram has been influential in the development of the new ICC model.

#### **4.4 Religious Education and Intercultural Communicative Competence**

In this Chapter so far, the discussion has revolved around the broad sphere of cultural encounters, but in my research, I particularly wanted to consider the role that religious education might contribute to developing ICC.

There is already a significant amount of theoretical work that has been established in this field, especially in the years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks which placed religion as a topic for debate within the public sphere. The European REDCo project (Ipgrave et al., 2009) drew together both qualitative and quantitative researchers from across Europe between 2006 and 2009. The focus of the research was "*Religion in Education. A Contribution to Dialogue or a Factor of Conflict in Transforming Societies of European Countries.*"

The main focus of the study was to explore how religious and cultural diversity could be presented in a way that would promote dialogue rather than conflict.

Whilst the research took place with fourteen to sixteen-year olds, the work completed by the REDCo community, particularly those based at WRERU is of particular interest to this research project. The project has spawned significant insights into the possibilities of combining religious education with cultural communication in a way that places difference at the heart of the dialogue. It also presents methodological approaches to research which combine the theoretical with the practical.

More recently Jackson (2014) has highlighted the possibility of using religious education to develop intercultural communication and suggests that the classroom could provide the possibility of a “safe space” for developing dialogue which respected different worldviews. In his “*Signpost*” recommendations he also recognised the significance of religious communities and the part they could contribute to developing these places of dialogue.

*The recommendations encourage links between schools and the wider community, including religious communities and non-religious organisations, as a means to learning, to help develop a culture of living together despite differences and to link local issues with global ones. (Jackson, 2014: 96)*

In this research I attempt to apply these recommendations through the recruitment of local faith representatives to the research team. Schools are familiar with working alongside faith representative through visits to places of worship, celebrations of festivals and visitors to the school to support specific aspects of the RE curriculum. This style of encounter I would argue, is best described as multi-faith RE. My research however is based on interfaith RE which draws together locally situated diverse groups who can

demonstrate the reality of living and working together as part of a team through interactive dialogue across issues of difference.

#### **4.5 Byram's Model of ICC**

I have chosen Michael Byram's (Byram, 1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence as the theoretical framework for this research. He has been working in the field of intercultural communication for over thirty years and is actively engaged in developing new initiatives and educational projects both through the work of the Council of Europe and through an informal network of researchers called "Cultnet" (Lundgren, 1996). Whilst his model was originally developed within the modern foreign language curriculum it has expanded to include intercultural citizenship.

Jackson (2014) has drawn attention to the possible links between effective RE pedagogy and ICC, challenging policymakers and teachers to undertake further research to evaluate potential benefits in this area. Since Byram and Jackson have worked together with the Council of Europe to develop European theory and practice of ICC it seems to provide a natural point of synergy to draw these two areas of learning together.

#### **4.6 Outline of Byram's Model**

Byram developed his model of ICC proposing specific attitudes, skills, and knowledge that would equip pupils to better communicate and engage with others across cultures. His model uses French terminology to describe five different "Savoirs" or types of knowing. Traditionally teachers have set learning objectives through a consideration of pre-required knowledge, skills and attitudes. Byram uses these as descriptors to provide a framework of competences.

	<b>Skills</b>	
	Interpret and Relate	
	savoir comprendre	
<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Attitudes</b>
Of Self and Others Of Interaction Individual and Societal	Political Education Critical Cultural Awareness	Relativising Self Valuing Others
savoirs	savoir s'engager	savoir etre
	<b>Skills</b>	
	Discover and/or Interact	
	savoir apprendre/faire	

Table 1 - Factors in Intercultural Communication (Byram, 1997: 34)

The first *savoir* described the knowledge pupils bring to an intercultural encounter. Byram suggested that this competence consisted of two categories: one that relates to individual interactions and one which applies to wider community encounters, similar to those highlighted by Ting-Toomey (1999). Pupils, he believed, required knowledge of their own individual identity and an understanding of methods of communication with others. For the purposes of this study I will assume that this knowledge has been developed through socialisation within the school and wider community and is consequently not specifically addressed within the teaching programme. I will be more focused on the skills and attitudes outlined in the model.

The second *savoir*, *savoir être* (knowledge of how to be), described pupil attitudes. Byram highlighted two fundamental attitudes for intercultural engagement: those of valuing others and relativizing self. Valuing others is further broken down further into attitudes of respect, openness and curiosity. Relativizing self is broken down into tolerating ambiguity, empathy and identity. The development of these attitudes was central to the success of my research Intervention.

The third and fourth *savoirs* described two sets of skills. The first set Byram described as *savoir apprendre/faire* (knowledge of how to learn). This described the process of discovery and interaction to find out new information. The second set of skills he described as *savoir comprendre* (knowledge of how to understand another person). This is the process associated with the ability to interpret and relate, or to attempt to understand another's perspective. The development of these skills was also central to my research Intervention.

Byram finally suggests that because of intercultural encounters pupils will become more action-orientated and critically culturally aware. This he describes as *savoir s'engager*, (knowledge of how to commit). Whilst my research is not fundamentally from the critical paradigm and does not seek to be emancipatory in nature it is relevant to include this attribute in the analysis of the pupils' responses as there are elements of personal rather than institutional emancipation at work in the research.

This model of competences fits well with Ricoeur's epistemological position described in Chapter 2 and discussed in more detail in my review of religious education pedagogies. The combined approach that held together a phenomenological and interpretative approach begins to demonstrate an overlap with Byram's model. Byram identifies two different and distinctive skill sets in his model of ICC.



Firstly, the ability to discover and interact, which I suggest is reflected in the descriptive phenomenology:

***Skills of discovery and interaction:** Ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. (Byram, 1997: 52)*

Secondly, the ability to interpret and relate, which I suggest is reflected in the hermeneutical phenomenology:

***Skills of interpreting and relating:** Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own. (Byram, 1997: 52)*

Whilst this is not an exact match I would like to propose that there is significant synergy in the skills and attitudes described by Byram in his Model of ICC and the philosophical position suggested by Flood which aligns the epistemological underpinnings of SR as those which draw on a combined approach of descriptive phenomenology and interpretive hermeneutics.

## **4.7 Formative Influences**

Having described Byram's model in detail, this section explores some of the formative influences behind its development. Byram (1997) in his early writing described two types of communicators, "tourists" and "sojourners". The tourist he described as one who was informed and enriched by another culture, whilst the sojourner approached encounters as opportunities to learn about and to learn from other societies, allowing these experiences to fundamentally change the way they engaged with cultural encounters. These sojourners, he suggested, had developed intercultural competence.

In his work as a foreign language teacher Byram recognised that communication required more than just the learning of linguistic and grammatical skills. He drew on the work of

Hymes (1972) who argued that emphasis needed to be placed on the sociolinguistic dimensions of communication as well the linguistic. Hymes was not writing for the foreign language teaching profession; he was concerned about interaction and communication within a social group.

*From a communicative standpoint, judgements of appropriateness may not be assigned to different spheres, as between the linguistic and the cultural; certainly the two spheres will interact.*

*(Gumperz and Hymes, 1972: 286)*

He suggested that there were two dimensions working side by side in the process of communication; the linguistic and the cultural. Meaningful interactions were not simply related to the translation of words they were also associated with the ability to understand and relate to the cultural context.

Byram drew on the work of Argyle (1983) and Poyatos (1992) who recognised the importance of non-verbal communication. Communicating across cultural spheres, they argued, required an understanding of non-verbal and relational signals. They highlighted the way that people communicated through facial expression and gaze, paralanguage such as loudness, and kinesic cues such as gestures and postures which added richness and depth to meaning beyond the words themselves, and that these can differ significantly across cultures. Knowing how to read and interpret these, they argued, enhanced meaningful communications.

Byram drew on the work of Tajfel's (1978) Social Identity Theory (SIT) which suggests that pupil identities are both personal and social and that these are developed in relation to others. Personal identities are formed through relationship with other individuals through interpersonal contact, whilst social identities are derived from being part of emotionally significant and supportive groups. Individuals bring their sense of identity to

communicative encounters with those from other cultures and they respond best when they feel secure and supported.

Gudykunst (1994) in his Anxiety Uncertainty Management (AUM) theory outlined some of the possible tensions experienced during encounters with strangers. He highlighted the tension that can arise to produce a hyper-awareness of cultural differences. Whilst Gudykunst's model was not designed for use in foreign language teaching, Byram used and developed some of his ideas in his own model of ICC. Gudykunst identified that there were motivational dimensions to intercultural encounters necessary to ease anxiety; Byram associated these motivational dimensions with attitudes. Gudykunst suggested that to communicate across cultures required knowledge of the process of learning from others. To be able to identify similarities and differences and interpret behaviours helped to reduce anxiety. Byram acknowledged some inconsistencies in the way he presented these competences and adapted and reframed some of these concepts into his model. From this brief discussion of formative influences, it is possible to see Byram was concerned with a holistic approach to intercultural encounters which considered the social, non-verbal, intergroup dimensions and the tensions that can occur when pupils encounter cultural differences.

#### **4.8 Developmental Issues**

While much of the debate surrounding ICC has been based within higher educational adult contexts, Byram argued that these same competences can be applied with young learners if presented in learner-appropriate ways.

*For the intercultural education of primary school children this means that the tasks given and the experiences offered must be selected in accordance of the learners' stage of development. They may be cognitively demanding as long as they are concrete; they may be emotionally complex as*

*long as they are experiential; they may be practically exacting as long as they are systematically arranged, ie permit the progression from simple to difficult. (Byram, 1997: 81)*

Byram's condition of concrete learning draws from Piagetian models. According to psychologist Jean Piaget (1954), children's learning styles progress through four stages of cognitive development. Children do not just gain more knowledge: rather, he argues, the very way they learn changes as they grow older. From birth to around the age of two he observes that children process their environment through motor and sensory experiences and learn from direct contact with their environment. From two until around seven children develop language skills and process the world from an egocentric perspective with much of the learning being intuitive and grounded in personal experiences. From the age of seven until around eleven Piaget described children's learning as concrete: they move beyond egocentric insights, developing an ability to see things from another person's perspective. They begin to explore through inductive reasoning and begin to generate theories from specific examples.

The concrete phase of learning outlined by Piaget suggests that pupils at KS2 are conceptually able to see the world from another perspective, to look for patterns in their experiences and draw conclusions about what they have learnt. This cognitive position implies that developing ICC through concrete intercultural encounters is a valid and age appropriate way for KS2 pupils to learn.

The fourth and final stage of Piagetian development is that of formal operations. At this stage pupils do not need concrete objects to process their thinking: they can use abstract reasoning to deduce possible outcomes and plan accordingly. Whilst Piaget suggests this stage does not develop until after the age of eleven, since some of the pupils participating in the research will have turned eleven by the end of the project I would argue that it would be appropriate to investigate whether the pupils' responses indicate formal

operations as outlined by Piaget. My experience of working with upper KS2 pupils is that some of them would be capable of these abstract deductive styles of reasoning and may indicate developmental higher order thinking.

Others have explored developmental readiness for ICC. Barrett (2007) in his empirical research found that primary pupils as young as five and six had knowledge about different countries but it was not until the age of around 7 that they exhibited preference for and pride in their own country. Helena Curtain and Carol Ann Pesola (1994) developed primary curriculum materials which sought to develop intercultural awareness. These included works based on cultural symbols, products and practices including the use of flags, stories, songs, food and festivals in age appropriate ways.

Byram's belief that learning should be experiential is widely recognised in educational contexts and is demonstrated well in David Kolb's model (1984). Kolb proposes that learning is at its most effective when applied through in a cyclical process. It is through a process of experiencing, observing, thinking and doing that pupils build upon their past understanding and can create new meanings from their encounters. This experiential style of learning reflects the learning theories behind intercultural encounters and reflects the style of learning experienced during SR sessions.

Byram argues that the systematic structuring of learning episodes with increased complexity will support pupils as they engage with developing ICC. Huber and Reynolds (Council of Europe, 2014) have recognised the importance of systematic planning in formal education to help pupils to develop relevant competences to equip them to become global citizens.

*In formal education, the "pedagogy of Intercultural Communicative Competence" involves the planned inclusion of learning outcomes defined in terms of the components of Intercultural Communicative Competence. (Council of Europe, 2014)*

The research design draws on these developmental issues and provides concrete systematic and experiential learning opportunities through the planned activities within the Story Tent Intervention.

#### **4.9 Intercultural Assessment Issues**

There has been little consensus on what constitutes the necessary concepts and components required to become an effective intercultural communicator. Darla Deardorff (2006) began to address this issue, investigating what agreement there was to be found amongst fellow ICC researchers. She carried out research in 24 higher educational institutions in the USA and found that, whilst there was a great diversity of opinion and outlooks across the institutions, there was significant agreement on core competences. She found that 80% of those who took part in her research agreed on 22 essential elements of ICC. Using this information Deardorff created a model of learning that emphasised the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to become an intercultural communicator. Whilst this research was developed in a higher education context in America, her findings are helpful to my study. She not only demonstrates significant consensus over key ICC but begins to address the process of how these competences develop through interactions with others.

*According to this research study, ICC competence development is an ongoing process and thus it becomes important for individuals to be provided with opportunities to reflect upon and assess the development of their own ICC. (Deardorff, 2009: 479)*

Deardorff suggests that there is a cyclical nature to the acquisition of ICC which requires specific attitudes, knowledge about communication and skills which enable students to develop an internal and then external response to the encounter. She suggests there is a reflexive dimension and process of self-assessment which enables the process to develop over time.

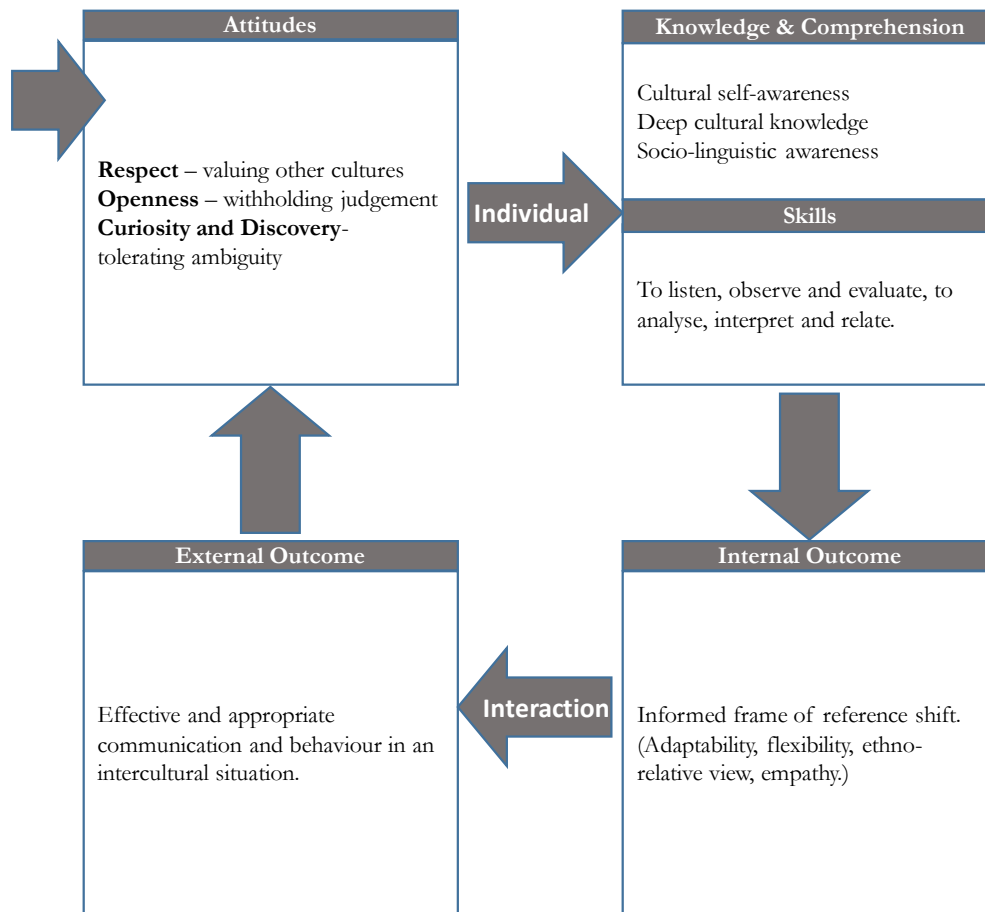


Table 2 - Pyramid Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (as redrawn by Deardorff) (Deardorff, 2006: 254)

There are overlapping competences which can be found reflected in Byram’s model. The table below makes a comparison between the findings of Deardorff’s research mapping the knowledge, skills and attitudes which were widely recognised in Deardorff’s research and those presented in Byram’s model. This comparison indicates significant overlap with the model outlined by Byram and strengthens the validity of his work.

ICC Model	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
<b>Byram</b>	Of self and other Of interaction Individual and societal	Discover and Interact Relate and Interpret	Relativising self Valuing others
<b>Deardorff</b>	Cultural self-awareness Deep cultural knowledge Socio-linguistic awareness	To listen Observe and evaluate. To analyse Interpret and relate	Respect Valuing others' culture Openness Withholding judgment Curiosity and discovery Tolerating ambiguity

Table 3 - Comparison of ICC outlined by Byram and Deardorff

In assessing ICC, Byram argues for a holistic assessment of all five savoirs. He refers to Gipps' (1994) distinctions between accountability assessment and educational assessment. Gipps proposed that ICC are multidimensional and complex and suggested that assessments should be pragmatic and skills-based. He argued that assessment should be more holistic than criteria referenced, but that objectives should be clearly identified. Pupils should be encouraged to monitor and reflect on their own work so that they become self-monitoring learners.

The concept of building a portfolio as a means of assessment is now widely used and recognised within schools. A portfolio enables teachers to gather information which includes "thick" description of achievement alongside profiles of performance. A notable assessment tool often used in schools is the INCA portfolio which is available on line and provides an assessment framework to gather assessment information. (European Commission, 2009)

#### **4.10 Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters**

For the purposes of this research I have chosen to use the interview structure produced by the Council of Europe; the "Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters" (AIE)



(Council of Europe, 2009). A copy of this can be found in Appendix E. It is a structured interview developed to facilitate pupils' reflexive learning after intercultural encounters. It is particularly useful as it has an interview structure specifically developed for use with younger learners and is grounded in Byram's ICC model: indeed, Byram himself was very much engaged in the formation of this tool.

The one-to-one interview consists of a series of seven questions which help pupils to explore and understand more fully their responses to the encounters. Each question provides an opportunity for the pupil to reflect and evaluate their responses and provides spaces for them to demonstrate ICC. The theoretical development of the AIE proposed ten different competences which were used as descriptors to indicate ICC. These can be mapped onto the *savoirs* outlined by Byram which make it a particularly useful and appropriate tool for my research.

No	ICC	Description	Links to <i>savoirs</i>
1	<b>Respect for otherness</b>	Shown through curiosity and openness, willingness to decentre and see things from another's viewpoint.	<b>Attitudes</b> <i>savoir etre</i>
2	<b>Acknowledgement of identity</b>	The ability to take full notice of other people's identities and recognise them for what they are.	<b>Knowledge</b> <i>savoirs</i>
3	<b>Tolerance of ambiguity</b>	The ability to accept ambiguity and lack of clarity and to be able to deal with this constructively.	<b>Attitudes</b> <i>savoir etre</i>
4	<b>Empathy</b>	The ability to project oneself into another person's perspective and their opinions, motives, ways of thinking and feeling.	<b>Attitudes</b> <i>savoir etre</i>

5	<b>Communicative awareness</b>	An ability to recognise different linguistic conventions, and different verbal and non-verbal communication conventions.	<b>Knowledge</b> <i>savoirs</i>
6	<b>Knowledge</b>	Knowledge of social processes, and of illustrations of those processes and products.	<b>Knowledge</b> <i>savoirs</i>
7	<b>Interpreting and relating</b>	The ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own.	<b>Skills</b> <i>savoir comprendre</i>
8	<b>Discovery and interaction</b>	The ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices.	<b>Skills</b> <i>savoir apprendre</i> <i>savoir faire</i>
9	<b>Critical cultural awareness</b>	An ability to evaluate critically.	<b>Education</b> <i>savoir s'engager</i>
10	<b>Action orientation</b>	The willingness to undertake some activity as a consequence of a reflection.	<b>Education</b> <i>savoir s'engager</i>

Table 4 - Intercultural competences outlined in the AIE (Council of Europe, 2009)

Other models of assessment which are included in this section are relevant to this research in that they provide insights into the potential styles for presentation of the data analysis. Tompenaars and Wooliams (Wooliams, 2005) have developed a “Framework of Competence for Today’s Global Village.” Twelve competences are grouped into four quarters and each of these competences are rated on a scale which then forms a radar pattern to indicate strengths and weaknesses for the individual being assessed. Whilst there is little direct corresponding overlap with those in Byram’s model and the AIE, it

does provide a useful insight into a method of displaying competences in a visual way through radar charts.

King and Baxter (2005) developed a multidimensional framework of intercultural maturity which provided descriptions of levels of competences. It comprised a three-stage metric with specific descriptions of initial, intermediate and mature level of competence. Each level is comprised of cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal competences. Whilst my research does not aim to measure the level of developed competences it does aim to track and identify examples of these skills and attitudes and it has been helpful to have a framework of progression to identify pupils operating at higher levels of competence.

#### **4.11 Personal Experience with ICC in Primary Schools.**

My own personal experience of working to develop ICC in schools has led me to believe this is an important and significant area of learning. During my MA research (Moseley, 2011) I explored the impact of intercultural dialogue through a school linking programme and investigated whether the Intervention demonstrated measurable improvement in pupil perceptions towards those from a different religious and cultural background. I developed a study with two classes of nine and ten-year olds, one in a small community primary school; the other an inner city multicultural primary school, a link which had been developed to fulfil government requirements to provide experiences within the UK to promote community social cohesion. The two classes met together three times during the year. I used a pattern of meetings that were based on inter-group contact models.

The first time the pupils met was based on a de-categorisation or personalisation model outlined by Brewer (1984). The second time the pupils met used the distinct social identity model (Hewstone, 1986). The pupils worked in groups where their identities

remained a salient part of the activities. The third and final time the pupils met was based on the common in-group identity model (Gaertner and Dovidio, 1989). The emphasis during this meeting was to join the two communities together and to enable the pupils to see each other as part of one unit working together rather than focusing on in-group / out-group distinctions.

Looking for differences and sharing similarities was at the heart of the research objectives. During these encounters' pupils demonstrated both a desire to be part of the new mixed school groups and to maintain a distinct identity with their own school community and neighbourhood.

Brewer suggests in her optimal distinctiveness theory that

*...social identity is derived from two opposing motivational systems that govern the relations between self-concept and membership in social groups. The first motivational construct is a need for assimilation and inclusion, a desire for belongingness that motivates immersion in social groups. The second is a need for differentiation from others that operates in opposition to the need for immersion. (Brewer, 1996: 296)*

I would argue that this duality is at the heart of good intercultural dialogue; a changing dynamic which allows insights into the things we have in common whilst allowing space to reflect on our differences. Holding these in balance enables the formation of a distinctive identity which can be informed by the other without loss of distinctiveness. There is a certain amount of synergy between this type of encounter and that envisioned in the second principle of SR; where it is not consensus that is not at the heart of the encounter, rather an understanding of difference.

Through my MA research project, I found that the pupils were able to demonstrate the ability both to belong to and remain distinct from each other in group settings. Through

comments from the interviews it was evident that these primary pupils were demonstrating the knowledge skills and attitudes necessary to learn through intercultural encounters.

*...We knew what to do and what we could talk about and we feel much more friendly with each other (2,3, a),*

and

*...it was really good fun talking to her because you get to learn stuff that you wouldn't really get to find out. (2,3, b)*

It is therefore with confidence that I approached this PhD thesis with primary pupils.

#### **4.12 Summary**

In this Chapter I have demonstrated that primary pupils were able to contend with the conceptual and emotional demands necessary to learn through the experiences of intercultural encounters. At the start of the Chapter, I set out to explore what synergies there might be between the principles of SR and the development of ICC. I have suggested that both ICC and SR are based in the dialogical traditions and seek to develop the ability to learn from others from significantly different backgrounds. In the case of ICC, the difference is based on culture; in the case of SR the difference is based in religion. Both ICC and SR work through the establishment of a “*third space*” of translation. This offers an environment where participants can explore and develop a deeper understanding of individual and group identity.

## 5 METHODOLOGY

In Chapter 5 I will outline how SR practices have been adapted and tested to suit the experience, skills and cognitive levels of primary age pupils to investigate development of ICC. The central premise of this research is that *if* we teach pupils using the principles outlined in SR, *then* pupils will become better able at communicating across cultures. My research hypothesised that pupils would develop ICC through interreligious engagement. The research design developed a two-part inquiry that first devised an Intervention based on SR principles and secondly measured pupils' ability to exercise the skills and attitudes outlined by Byram to communicate and engage with others from different backgrounds.

### 5.1 Introduction

Whilst there were many different methodologies I could have applied to the research question, I was keen to select a methodological position that reflected the philosophical position of SR. As I have outlined in Chapter 2, Ford and Ochs (Ochs, 1998) situate the practice within the pragmatic tradition drawing on the work of Peirce, James and Dewey, a practical approach built on the premise that learning develops through an interactional, experienced based learning process. In Chapter 3 I reviewed how SR fitted with religious education methodologies and aligned it with a combined approach that recognised the importance of engaging with religion through authentic representation, but also included interpretation and reflexivity in relating new learning to past experiences. I have built on the dialogical and narrational pedagogic principles discussed in Chapter 3 to develop a form of SR that is age-appropriate. I wanted the research to be based in practical experience but also upon theoretical principles. I wanted to combine the experiences of the teachers, faith participants and pupils but also remain objective in my analysis of the findings. AR methodology is well suited to this combined approach.

Choosing a suitable research methodology, Hartas (2010) argues, is fundamental to the research process: it relates to the ontological or metaphysical position of the researcher and the topic under investigation. How the researcher perceives reality impacts the way they search for knowledge. She describes this as a lens through which a researcher looks, reflecting the philosophical tradition or paradigm from which the researcher approaches her or his analysis.

## **5.2 Methodological Position**

My research methodological position has developed as I have considered different approaches to the research. I was initially keen to explore the research questions through a post-positivistic systematic and measured way and my initial inclination was to reach for quantitative measures to see how many ICC the pupils were demonstrating and how these compared across gender, faith and socio-economic backgrounds. I wanted to be as objective as possible and was keen to measure developmental changes over time with a view to developing an assessment metric. An initial exploration into quantitative methods used with sacred texts in the past revealed the work of Loman and Francis (2006) who developed an Index of Biblical Interpretation. I could have used this model as a basis to develop a metric of ICC. However, as I began to gain insights from the ICC literature it became clear that a mixed method portfolio approach to assessment was recommended using evidence from a range of sources, including Thick Descriptors (that is, including a broader cultural context) from qualitative assessments. Grimmitt (2000) warned of the dangers of applying overtly standardised measures to the assessment of religious education where learning outcomes are not always easy to measure and often politically motivated. However, I did want to find a way to measure the impact of the Intervention on pupils. Nigel Fancourt (Ipgrave et al., 2009: 84) in his recent research into assessment methods in RE suggested that assessment processes should be linked to pedagogic

principles in ways that should reflect the teaching styles themselves. Therefore, I wanted to find a methodology and assessment process which would match good practice in both ICC and RE.

I considered using an Evaluation Research methodology that would have placed an emphasis on how effective the adapted SR Intervention had been. This approach has often combined formative and summative assessments as advocated in the portfolio approach to ICC. It has been used to establish how well a new educational program or policy initiative is being received. Miller (2009) in her recent research, evaluated the impact of a Continuing Professional Development course. Whilst there are similarities between our investigations, the focus of my research was not the Intervention itself but rather on whether the pupils could develop ICC. The Evaluative Research approach tends to place power in the hands of the outside researcher who is looking in making judgements into the effectiveness of the Intervention, whereas I wanted to be more integrated in the process.

I also considered Comparative Case Study methodology. It is well suited to the consideration of ICC as encounters often involve separate communities coming together to work on a shared project. This would have enabled an exploration into the way schools from different demographic areas responded to the curriculum Intervention in the different social settings. Significant work has been undertaken through such Comparative methodologies: of particular note are those researchers involved with Byram's Cultnet (Byram, 2008) These have involved several international linking projects. However, I felt this comparative element was not a central part of my research question. I wanted to explore how the Intervention worked in different settings but each time I wanted to look for the competences the pupils were demonstrating as individuals rather than the responses of the different communities.



While it is interesting to be aware of the different responses and contexts as described above, I wanted to apply a methodology that would build on the ontological and epistemological philosophical positions of the pragmatic, phenomenological and hermeneutical underpinnings of SR.

I would argue that SR does not seek to understand the Platonic “essences” of the scriptures, nor is it about truth claims: rather it is about interpreting experiences of faith through encounters with others. Since the interpretative nature of SR is fundamental to its practise and principles, I wanted to ensure that this was reflected in my selected methodology. SR does have an element of critical theory in that it prioritises the breakdown of prejudice and the building up of relationships as part of the process of engagement. I was not looking to develop action other than challenging attitudes and developing skills. It is the long-term commitments of communities of practice that regularly meet to share SR that are most effective at pursuing this aim. In this sense my research inevitably had a limited transformational impact due to the necessarily-few Intervention cycles.

### **5.3 Action Research Methodological Principles**

I chose AR methodology as it combined the practical with the theoretical and fitted well with the cyclical approaches of both SR and ICC. The following section outlines some of the significant aspects of AR, why it is well suited to this research and describes how I have applied the methodology to my specific research design. AR methodology aims to produce academic knowledge alongside actions that can be applied in real life situations, with the aim of improving practice. Whilst AR methodology may be described by some scholars as a single concept, others argue that it is in fact a family of practices (Reason and Bradbury, 2008) and within this family McNiff (2014) suggests that there are many

outworking's including: Technical AR, Practical AR , Self-reflective Inquiry, Appreciative Inquiry, Collaborative Autobiography, Participatory AR and Critical AR .

### **5.3.1 Action Research Integrates Research and Action**

At a fundamental level AR methodology applies what is known with what is done; it combines research with actions. Lewin (1948) is widely recognised as one of the early developers of this process-driven methodology. He claims that knowledge is generated through practical actions applied in real life situations. Lewin's model has been revised and developed further for an educational context by Elliott through his curriculum development research (Elliott, 1991). It has also been applied within a RE context by O'Grady (2003) and the REDCo (Ipgrave et al., 2009) team based at Warwick Religious Education Research Unit.

AR methodology has been adapted and applied in several areas of practical social inquiry such as health and social policy. However, it was under the influence of John Elliott at the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) that the teacher-as-researcher movement grew in Britain. For John Elliott (1991) an AR project starts with a "reconnaissance" phase; an initial exploration into the key issues. It allows a theory to emerge through practical interactions as it considers research "into" an action rather than "about" an action. Once the theory has been identified, Elliott has suggested an outline of the elements of a planning cycle that can be repeated over a series of iterations. An Intervention is planned, implemented, monitored and observed, often in collaboration with a core research team. A period of reflection allows space for the researcher to process the findings and adapt the Intervention for the next iterative cycle. AR methodology provides a vehicle to improve and make an action more effective. Its goal is to improve professional practice and develop a deeper understanding of teaching and learning and build new knowledge for dissemination in the public sphere.

### 5.3.2 Action Research is Conducted in Collaborative Partnership

Putting the teachers at the heart of the research process has been an important aspect of the widespread development of AR within educational settings. Working as a researcher draws on the best from the research community; working as teacher researchers draws from the best teaching practice. This was the model Stenhouse used in developing the Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse et al., 1985). Teachers have a unique insight into how curriculum initiatives match pupils' abilities, which then puts them in a unique position to suggest and test improvements.

*From the viewpoint of the experimentalist, classrooms are the ideal laboratories for the testing of educational theory. From the point of view of the researcher whose interest lies in naturalistic observation, the teacher is a potential participant observer in classrooms and schools. From whatever standpoint we view research, we must find it difficult to deny that the teacher is surrounded by rich resource opportunities (Stenhouse et al., 1985: 15)*

Having recognised the importance of teachers in the research process there are those who would argue that they are too emotionally involved to be objective in their observations and that they carry unforeseen bias. It is difficult for criticality to be maintained. Being aware of this conflict of interest and identifying clearly how the different participants interact helps the researcher to contain this issue.

Reason and Bradbury (2008) identify the importance of teacher positionality and describe three teacher-researcher positions. The first position is that of the individual researcher; the researcher who investigates their own practices. An example of an individual researcher can be found in the work of O'Grady who developed pupil motivation with his year 8 pupils (O'Grady, 2003). Secondly, the researcher who works face to face with issues of mutual concern of the participants: for example Ipgrave worked with a team of teachers to develop interfaith pupil-to-pupil dialogue (Ipgrave, 2001). Thirdly, the

researcher working with an extended group of participants, including participants from outside the classroom, such as the Stenhouse Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1975). My research methodology combines the second and the third of these positions.

Herr and Anderson (2005) developed a six part continuum of positionality; insider researcher, insider in collaboration with other insiders, insider with collaboration with outsider, reciprocal collaboration of insider and outsider teams, outsider in collaboration with insiders, and outsiders studying insiders. Using this scale, I would describe my position as an outsider in collaboration with insiders.

I will be developing an outsider-insider hermeneutic which will be carried through into my relationships with the teachers both as an insider classroom practitioner with knowledge and experience of teaching RE in primary schools, but also as an outsider with experience of SR and its theoretical underpinnings. I will be moving iteratively between the classroom and theoretical perspectives. On the inside I will have access to the perspectives of the teachers, and from the outside I will have the perspective of academics from, for example, the Cambridge Interfaith Programme. This insider-outsider dynamic will enable me to engage with academic theory and discussion and bring the results of the study back into the classroom in the form of practical teaching Interventions. This multi-party research bears some relationship to McNiff's Critical Action Research (McNiff, 2013) but my own position is more of a mediating one, rather than being firmly placed on the side of academia and theory.

I have chosen to adopt a form of AR methodology that combines Participatory and Critical approaches. *Participatory Action Research* traditionally involves collaboration of co-participants in the delivery and evaluation of the process. My research project added an additional participatory dimension in that it not only positioned teachers and researchers as collaborative partners but included a third group of participants, those from the faith

communities. Although my work does include a degree of shared ownership amongst the participating teachers, their communication between schools is mediated through me, and within each school they will work in partnership with me as we develop the Intervention.

*Critical Action Research* traditionally involves the collaboration of stakeholders and researchers who work together to improve practice.

*Typically this might involve university researchers working alongside teachers, curriculum developers and community members with expertise in the area under investigation. (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000: 569)*

However, my research does not have the emancipatory emphasis that is typical in this style of work. SR does address the issue of prejudice and seeks to challenge attitudes; however, this is applied on a personal rather than institutional level. I would position my research somewhere between these Participatory and Critical Action Research paradigms.

### **5.3.3 Action Research is both Theoretical and Practical**

As a teacher-researcher I knew something of the power of AR from the longitudinal study I had completed for my Masters degree. I had seen how the cyclical nature of exploring ICC with children had created an awareness amongst the pupils that they were learning something new and something of value. I wanted to explore further this methodology beyond the school linking experience and into the discipline of religious education.

I was aware that AR methodology provided scope for different voices to be heard in parallel; to bring together shared insights and understanding without consensus necessary in all aspects of the analysis, in fact the different perspectives add richness to the insights. This approach mirrored the principles outlined in the practice of SR and strengthened

the appropriateness of using this approach as a research methodology. McNiff highlights this and states that:

*Action researchers regard learning and experiences as processes that enable individuals and groups to negotiate choices about who they are and how they are together. They do not aim for consensus or harmony, but try to create spaces of understanding for negotiating differences.*  
(McNiff, 2013: 30)

I was also aware that this dynamic process of generating knowledge together at the point of delivery marked it out as beneficial and effective as a means of developing and applying new insights alongside each other. McKernan has emphasised the advantageous position of AR teachers.

*Action Research, as a teacher-researcher movement, is at once an ideology which instructs us that practitioners can be producers as well as consumers of curriculum inquiry; it is a practice in which no distinction is made between the practice being researched and the process of researching it. That is, teaching is not one activity and inquiring into it another. The ultimate aim of inquiry is understanding; and understanding is the basis of action for improvement.* (McKernan, 1996: 3)

This privileged position of the teacher researcher raised the issue of maintaining teacher impartiality. When teachers are so heavily invested in finding a successful solution to the problems identified it is easy to look for evidence to support the theory. I was keen to maintain an awareness of this, including focused discussions around the assumptions of the participants to better understand this dynamic.

However, whilst I was aware of the dangers, I was also keen to recognise there was a significant potential benefit to this type of learning. Combining research with reflexive practice developed the teacher researchers themselves, alongside the professional development and understanding of the learning process, personal learning could also

happen. Values and beliefs were challenged and changed in the process of engagement, making this not only a learning opportunity for the pupils but also for the research team.

#### **5.3.4 Action Research Starts from a Vision of Social Transformation.**

AR methodology is often aligned with the Critical paradigm of educational research in that it seeks to bring about improvement for the pupils participating. Somekh states that AR is not “value neutral” (Somekh, 2006). My research, based on SR principles, promoted an Intervention that challenged prejudice through building friendship. It has a moral position and an assumption that prejudice should be challenged, an attitude upheld by schools. However, it was important that in the research design I maintained an awareness of personal assumptions and I built in measures which would hold me accountable and keep my observations and reflections as rigorous and transferable as possible.

#### **5.3.5 Action Research Requires a High Level of Reflexivity**

Reflexivity is central to both the development of ICC and SR: it is fundamentally a socially situated process that requires an ability to see things from another’s point of view. This reflexivity involves a personal reflection on an issue, its possible interpretations and subsequent adjusting of ideas and developing new insights. This term reflexivity is used in a broad range of research contexts with different epistemological backgrounds. Heron and Reason (1997) have used the term to explore theories of propositional knowledge in a way that challenges realities. Pfohl (1985) has used reflexivity to describe the process of making meaning from an ethno-methodological position generating procedural knowledge. However, it is the position of Bourdieu (1992) as outlined in Hartas (2010) who described reflexivity as a personal examination of beliefs to generate personal knowledge which can best be applied in this research context.

*In a personal sense, reflexivity also refers to the ways in which people examine their own beliefs, perceptions and practices, and implement change as a result. Action research can be seen as a reflexive discipline as it involves the action researcher in a process of developing and understanding themselves and how they relate to their context, and taking action accordingly.*

*(Hartas, 2010: 136)*

### **5.3.6 Action Research Involves Engagement with Existing Knowledge**

I have outlined in the previous Chapters significant existing bodies of knowledge from which this research has drawn. The literature review provided an overview of theoretical models and principles pertaining to the development of SR, RE and ICC. My research combines knowledge from these disciplines to create a new inter-disciplinary approach to the development of ICC.

It builds on established and reliable models of AR methodology where there has been a long-standing tradition of curriculum development. Well established research developed from Stenhouse (1975) through to Elliott (1983), and later McKernan (1996) have outlining a compelling methodology for reflexive practice. More recently there has been a significant body of AR carried out in the Warwick Religious Education Research Unit through the work of REDCo. Jackson's interpretative approach to RE has been explored, developed and findings published which highlight the value and established practice of AR in developing religious and inter-cultural education initiatives (Ipgrave et al., 2009).

Having presented a case for using AR methodology, the remainder of this Chapter describes the development and implementation of the Story Tent Intervention, followed by an outline of how I evaluated and developed the work in the light of the research findings.



## 5.4 Action Research Design – Part 1

### The Intervention – Synthesising Theory into Practice

The first part of the AR methodology cycle consisted of a development phase that produced an age appropriate Intervention building on the theories underpinning SR encounters as described in the previous Chapters. It considered the findings from my school-based reconnaissance investigation which I undertook before the start of this research project. The Intervention design was developed in collaboration with the Cambridge Interfaith Programme who have delivered SR programs amongst adults in the UK for over a decade and are key stake holders in this research project. Working together provided a mutually supportive collaboration which drew on the skills and insights from practitioners in both the delivery of SR programs and primary RE. Together we were able to combine the theory and translate it into activities suitable to match the interests and abilities of primary pupils. A copy of the first Story Tent Intervention can be found in Appendix B. It has also been reported in more detail in RE Today (Moseley, 2017a) and also on the CIP website in the form of a blog entry (Moseley, 2017b)

We wanted to ensure the scripture texts reflected an accurate interpretation of the stories being used. To this end we drew on the experience of other faith representatives who were consulted in this developmental stage to ensure the texts maintained the integrity of the faith tradition. Since initial work carried out by the CIP revolved around the Abrahamic traditions it was a natural extension to build the Intervention around the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith traditions. We initially wanted to choose a story that would be significant to the different perspectives and which would provide a context for pupils to explore the differences and similarities found in the three sacred texts. There were many different stories we could have selected that would have been suitable, but

Noah was the one voted most popular amongst my class before the Intervention took place.

The name “Story Tent” was selected as it reflected the Jewish concept of “Mishkan” or tabernacle; a portable sanctuary and spiritual centre for the community. We planned to use a gazebo tent to create a focal point for telling the stories as a physical representation of a portable shared sacred space.

The Intervention reflected the recommendations of the RE Council outlined in the RE Review (Religious Education Council, 2013) and particularly aimed to address two of its objectives:

*Aii) to help pupils to identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews and*

*Cii) to enquire about what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all. (Religious Education Council, 2013: 14-15)*

I also drew on the concept of Story and Narrative as a basis to deliver the Intervention. Mayer in his book “*Narrative Politics*”, had suggested that there was a strong cognitive dimension to learning through narrative. The story structure enabled pupils to relate the familiar with the unfamiliar and create meaning from the process.

*Narrative turns out to be a powerful cognitive tool. By translating experience into the code of a story - with plot, and character and meaning – we make the unfamiliar familiar, the chaotic orderly, and the incomprehensible meaningful. (Mayer, 2014: 66)*

He suggested that as people apply basic narrative constructs they overlay these on personal experiences. Through the hermeneutical process of interpretation, pupils apply new information to past experiences and extract meaning from the story. The story becomes more than just the words expressed externally and takes on a new form

internally as pupils look out for features that match their experiences, fill in the gaps in their imagination, and expand their understanding. Mayer hypothesises that this creates a mental codification or schema which encompasses details beyond the literal description. Each new piece of information refines the plot, context and characters in the mind through the process of relating similarities and differences and applying them to the new. It is through this process of relating and interpreting he argues, that new meanings and understandings can be constructed. This hermeneutical dimension makes it useful in developing ICC, particularly those skills involved with interpreting and relating new insights.

Whilst this schema formation can provide a helpful aid to learning, it can also present challenges as prejudiced attitudes and stereotypes can become embedded if left unchallenged. To address this issue, we provided a faith representative to act as a guide to the story, which not only ensured an authentic representation of the story but also challenged such stereotypes.

This model of working alongside another to support learning and understanding has been developed by Vygotsky (1978). He argues that whilst some knowledge is innate, higher order learning takes place through social interaction. When pupils work alongside another who knows more about the subject under investigation they can be led into a place of deeper understanding than they could working alone.

Vygotsky identifies the Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD) as the optimal point of learning. Through a structured encounter with someone with additional knowledge, often a teacher or adult, he argued that pupils could be supported in developing new understanding at a point which is just beyond their comfort zone but not too far outside to feel uncomfortable or stressed. If pupils were too familiar with the learning material, they do not gain new knowledge; alternatively, if material is too demanding pupils feel

stretched and stressed and do not engage with the learning. The ZPD was entered through a process of scaffolding, where pupils are taken out of their comfort zone and challenged by another to expand their understanding whilst remaining in a receptive state. The use of faith representatives as facilitators provided the pupils with this type of supportive scaffolding.

Bartlett (1932) made a link between narrative and memory indicating that the use of narrative can help embed new information in the memory. In his UK-based research, he asked participants to read a story and then rewrite it based on memory over a period of months. What he found was that over time participants remembered the main ideas but in a shorter form and that elements were both lost and gained. He also found that elements that were unfamiliar were changed to make sense of it within their own culture. His schema theory suggested that memory was an active reconstructive process influenced by past experiences and understanding of personal worldviews which had an impact on attitudes.

*Bartlett demonstrated that we most readily recall our "attitude" towards past events, not just the actual events. We then construct a story whose point and meaning justifies our remembered attitude. What we remember, it seems, is the story that "should" have happened, not what really did. (Mayer, 2014: 68)*

This might suggest that the use of story has the potential to impact attitudes; that, if challenged in sensitive ways, the story could help reframe attitudes and prejudices to bring about change.

Stories also provided a place for identity to be explored as they can help us to locate ourselves in the world; as we relate to the characters, we become more self-aware of our relation to others. We identify with some characters and imagine what it would be like to be that other. This requires a process of adopting the position of the "other" with

respect to the self and trying to see the world from a different perspective. This enables a review of who one is, with possibility of repositioning oneself to take on a different view. This can pose a threat to personal identity if the subject matter creates too much dissonance between the imagined and the real, but the reflexive cycle of interacting with a different position can enhance identity negotiation as described by Ting-Toomey (2015).

This concept of identity can be taken beyond the space of the personal and into the wider public spaces of local communities, religions, ideologies and culture. Cultures are not static organisations and, whilst functionalists may argue that history is being constantly reinvented and those with a more conservative outlook hold on to the notion that culture is timeless and independent of any institutional accommodation, SR allows the free space to move beyond the dualistic viewpoint and find a third way which can allow “both/and” to be held together. These spaces provide opportunities to explore “who we are” and “who I am.”

## **5.5 Implementing the Intervention**

The section that follows outlines the preparatory work that took place before the start of the Intervention. It describes how the participating schools and research team members were selected, how the initial pilot Intervention was implemented, an overview of the preparatory training session and a brief review of each of the participating research schools.

### **5.5.1 Building a Team - School Participants**

I wanted to explore a range of responses to the Intervention across schools with different demographics and religious affiliations. I decided to apply a purposeful sample which represented different styles of school. I sought the advice of a Diocesan

Educational Advisor to find a Church of England school (“St Village”) to participate in the research. My own community school (“Smalltown”) was keen to participate and, through personal contacts, I was able to enlist an Academy faith school (“Middlecity”) as the third participating school.

The three schools thus recruited to take part in this study represented a range of perspectives and approaches to teaching religious education. The first school was a single-form-entry rural Church of England school, the second a town community school with single form entry and similar in size to the first school and the third was a two-form-entry city faith-based Academy school. Permission to carry out the research was negotiated through each headteacher and KS2 class teacher in the participating school.

### **5.5.2 Building a Team - Faith Representatives**

Working alongside each school community I wanted to include faith representatives who would provide insights into the dynamic relationship between sacred texts and faith as worked out in practice. I applied a purposeful selection process and brought together representatives from different faith traditions drawing from the contacts I had with fellow PhD students and contacts developed through the CIP community.

The consequence of this selection was that the team members were highly motivated and experienced in the process of teaching and education. Some were able to offer insights into the research methodology and others a deeper understanding of SR practice; however, their primary role was to act as representatives of their faith tradition working out their own personal living faith.

This completed the team of educational researchers, SR advisors, classroom teachers and faith representatives. The pupils were at the centre of the research and were also

encouraged to see themselves as part of the research investigation. A detailed summary of the research team can be found in Appendix I.

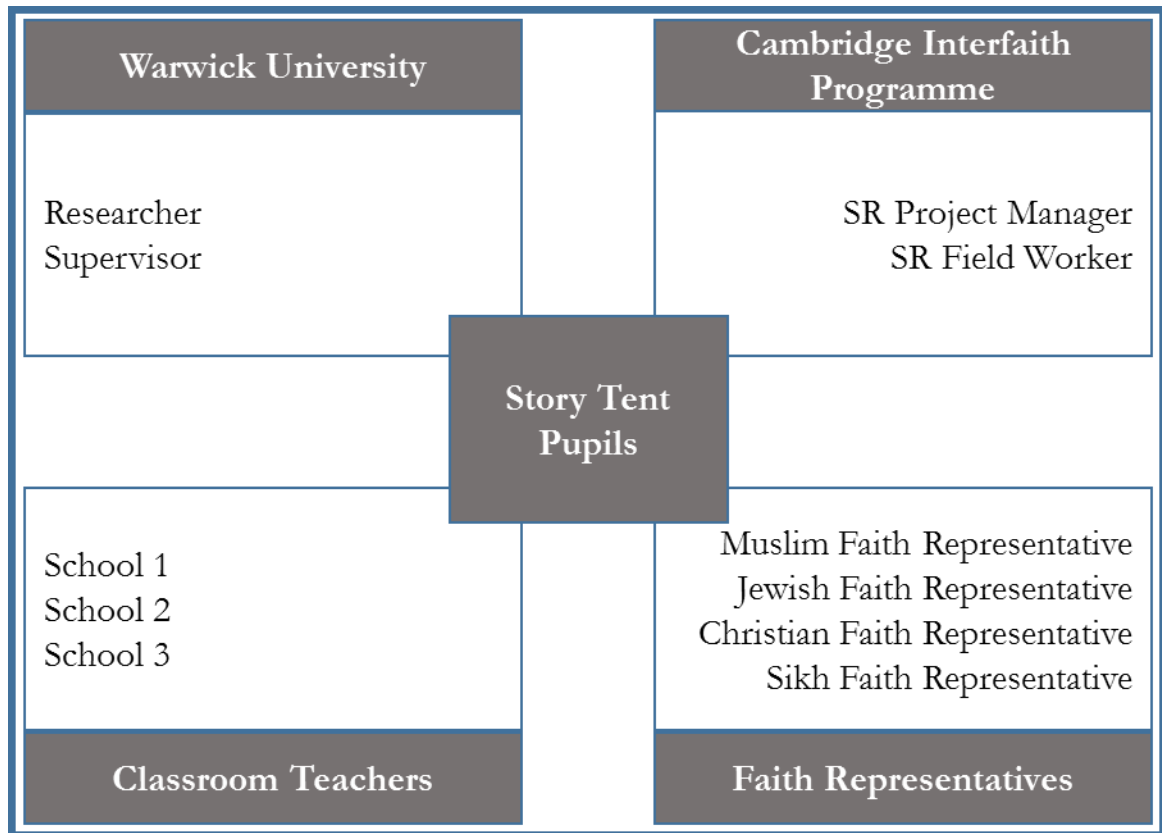


Table 5 – Action Research Team

Before the research phase began, a pilot scheme was tested with a class of Year Six pupils to explore how the Intervention was received and improvements were made before the launch of the project. A training afternoon was delivered in the summer term of 2015 for the teachers and faith representatives who had agreed to be part of the Action Research project during the academic year 2015/2016. This provided an opportunity to share the theoretical background, to make links with the teachers from the different schools and faith representatives from different faith communities, to talk through the Intervention and decide how each school wanted to engage.

### **5.5.3 Before the Intervention - Pilot Scheme July 2015**

The initial pilot “Story Tent” day took part at the end of the summer term in 2015 with a class of thirty-one year six pupils. The pupils were informed that this was a pilot project, that participation was voluntary and that they were taking part specifically to help improve the Intervention. Parental approval had been gained by the school in advance and one pupil was withdrawn from the day on the request by the parent.

The day was divided into four sessions; each session had a key question, a set of learning intentions, specific ICC skills to be explored, an outline of the learning episode and an assessment activity. There was a Suggestions Box for pupils to offer any ideas or feedback about how to improve the day. The pupils were asked to complete a questionnaire with a selection of open-ended questions and statements on a Likert scale both before and after the Intervention.

The structure of the day was well received, and minor improvements were suggested by the pupils. However, it was clear that the questionnaire that was used was too complicated, the vocabulary too complex and would need to be reworked into a form that would be more accessible for primary pupils. This feed-back prompted further reflection on the style of questionnaire that might be most accessible and opportunity to explore different kinds of scales and consider how data could be collected in a way which was easily accessible to primary pupils.

### **5.5.4 Before the Intervention - Training for AR Team – July 2015**

Before the start of the research program I wanted to provide an opportunity for the team to meet each other, gain an insight into the principles behind the research, as well as the provide practical details of the “Story Tent” RE themed day. A training afternoon took place which provided an opportunity for the team to experience the practice of SR, to understand the practical details of the Intervention which included sample session



activities. As the group was small, questions were addressed throughout the afternoon as they arose. At the end of the afternoon, three dates were set to be completed in the schools in the second week of October. I was keen to deliver the Intervention in all three schools at around the same time to reduce unnecessary variables.

#### **5.5.5 Before the Intervention - Review of Current School Documents**

Before the Intervention I wanted to gain an understanding into how RE and Citizenship had been presented in each of the research schools and investigate the role sacred texts had in the school curriculum. I asked the RE specialists to provide information on RE planning with reference to the use of sacred texts and to complete a short questionnaire. I also used the school prospectus to build up an overview of the attitudes to Global citizenship and provision of any teaching strategies employed.

St Village School and Smalltown Community both use the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus which states that pupils are expected to:

*... demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how sacred text and other forms of religious writing and expression and how they may be interpreted in different ways including literal and non-literal interpretations. (2016 – ARS1/ARS2)*

Middlecity Academy had developed its own RE syllabus that indicates that pupils are expected to:

*...to find out what sacred texts and other sources say about God, the world and human life. (2016 – ARS3)*

#### **5.5.6 AR1 – St Village School**

The first research school was a one form entry Church of England school set in a rural Warwickshire village. It had a strong emphasis on its Christian ethos and the place within its community through the active participation of the local church. The teaching of RE

had been judged as outstanding by SIAS in 2016 and was considered a core part of the teaching curriculum. The RE Curriculum was delivered on a four-year rolling program which was based on the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus. The school had supplemented the curriculum with units that reflected the seasonal Christian festivals of harvest, Christmas and Easter.

Pupils worked with people from different faith backgrounds through on-site encounters within the school context and off-site visits to local places of worship. Sacred texts were used in RE lessons and during collective worship times. The Bible was used frequently, and other texts were used to support specific units of learning. Global citizenship was not taught as a discrete subject however, pupils were taught French and other languages were explored as part of the Y6 transition programme into secondary school.

#### **5.5.7 AR2 – Smalltown Community School**

Smalltown Community School was a one form entry community school set in a Warwickshire town. It had a strong emphasis on promoting a caring and open community school which had an active role within the town community throughout the year. The school had developed its own curriculum for teaching Global Citizenship and maintained school links within the UK, in Europe and Asia. The RE curriculum was based on the Warwickshire Agreed Syllabus and taught as a distinct subject on a weekly basis.

Pupils worked with people from different faith traditions through visitors to the school and off-site trips to local places of worship. Sacred texts were used within the RE curriculum and assemblies. The school took part in a teaching programme called “Open the Book” which was developed by the Bible society and delivered by volunteers from a local Anglican church. The school had copies of the Torah and the Quran which were used in the classrooms during RE units of work. Pupils in KS1 were taught Chinese with

the option to continue in KS2. All pupils were taught French in Y4, Y5 and Y6 as part of the global citizenship curriculum and took part in a visit to France in Y6.

#### **5.5.8 AR3 – Middlecity Academy**

Middlecity Academy was a two-form entry Faith based Academy school set in inner city Birmingham. The character of the academy was “*inspired by the life of Jesus*” and the ethos and values of the school were based on inclusion and equality, healthy relationships which respect difference, openness and perseverance. The Curriculum was based on four principles of learning: how to engage, how to develop, how to innovate and how to express ideas. The RE curriculum was delivered through a new academy-based programme which had been developed in 2014. It was based on a Jewish epistemological position underlying the three principles of Shalom, Yada and Rabbi. Shalom presents RE in a way that promotes peace and well-being, Yada presents learning in a way that is experiential and relational, Rabbi recognises the important role the teacher has in guiding and modelling the learning process.

Pupils meet people of faith through school trips to churches, outside speakers and through a whole school themed week called “Inspire”. Pupils were taught French and Bengali as part of the curriculum. The RE specialist could not recall pupils using the Bible in the classrooms and was clear that they had not used either the Torah or the Quran in classroom sessions. She was excited about the way the new academy RE syllabus would enable a return to authentic use of sacred texts, as understood by faith communities, within the school curriculum.

### **5.6 The Story Tent Intervention**

The section that follows outlines how the Intervention was introduced to the pupils at the start of the Story Tent Intervention and then describes in more detail how each of

the four learning episodes was delivered across the day. Since the teaching Intervention was considered a normal part of the RE curriculum the gatekeepers at each of the schools had taken necessary action to inform the parents of the activity and ensured parental rights to withdraw their children if they had not wanted them to participate. Only one parent opted to remove their child from the pilot Intervention, all the children from the three classes who took part in the two subsequent interventions opted to participate.

### **5.6.1 Introduction to the Day**

At the start of the day pupils were introduced to the key ICC research skills and attitudes that were to be measured during the day, these can be found in Appendix K. They were encouraged to view themselves as research assistants with important perspectives on improving the activities for future pupils who might participate in the day. The self-assessment sheet, found in Appendix C, was explained as a tool they would be using to help track their responses to the different learning episodes and maintain an awareness of the ICC being explored. Finally, pupils worked through the guidelines for dialogue outlined in Appendix J, so that they would be clear about the expectations of behaviours within the dialogical space as outlined in the previous Chapters. These were guidelines that I adapted and simplified from The Feast's guidance for interfaith encounters (Feast, 2014).

### **5.6.2 Session 1**

The emphasis in the first session was to begin to develop pupils' ICC attitudes that valued the "other": those of Respect, Openness and Curiosity. We wanted to build pupil confidence in this introduction and, since stories are a daily part of the curriculum, placing story at the start of the Intervention provided a familiar framework for them to begin to explore the comparative texts. An enquiry-based method was used with key

questions to be explored. We wanted to present opportunities for dialogue which enabled a third space to be developed and other perspectives to be explored. A series of short activities were presented to groups of 5 or 6 each with one facilitator to observe the responses and develop the discussion. At the end of the first session each of the sacred texts was presented by a faith representative with key vocabulary introduced.

### **5.6.3 Session 2**

At the start of this session the pupils worked together to put up the “Story Tent”, a garden gazebo, which became the “mizpah” or meeting place. The concept of a physical place of meeting is a central part of the SR process. The “mizpah” provides a safe space where people could talk through and explain their beliefs secure in the knowledge that they will be respected and listened to within an agreed set of rules of dialogue. It was to be a place of hospitality where different voices could be heard. The emphasis in this session was on discovery and interaction. Pupils were tasked to discover as much as possible about the sacred stories through the reading of, and dialogue around, the texts.

The teacher divided the class into three groups selected on the criteria of those who would work well together. The class teachers were asked to do this as they had unique insights into the group dynamics within the classroom. All members of the group were considered equal and were given the task of exploring and understanding one of the three versions of the story with a view to present it to their fellow classmates through a dramatic interpretation of the story.

In each sub-group, the pupils heard the story read by a faith representative and had an opportunity to ask questions about the meaning of the story and the personal interpretations of it. This personal interpretation of faith worked out by members of religious communities is central to the practice of SR. What followed was an opportunity for the pupils to ask questions to clarify a deeper understanding of another perspective.

In this context pupils acted as both observers of the reading of the text and then as presenters of the story. The activity made no assumption of any alignment with a faith tradition and placed the pupils as investigators. It was only afterwards through the process of interviewing the pupils that they were invited to interpret their learning in the light of their own faith positions.

At the end of the session each group took turns to present their drama and all the pupils heard the story from three different faith traditions. This physical space of the Story Tent, as well as representing the sacred space of hospitality, also represented a space that reflected Gadamer's fusion of horizons. The story was considered from three different perspectives and provided depth of insights as pupils were able to explore a three-part investigation into the similarities and differences within the interpretations. The object under review was the content of the stories. These dramatic presentations took part under the gazebo. Each of the three sub-groups were allocated a space just outside the tent. Three of the four sides were represented by three different perspectives of the story from the three different faith traditions, whilst the fourth side acted as a space to display the different sacred texts under investigation.

#### **5.6.4 Session 3**

In the afternoon, the pupils were reassigned into five smaller groups which included two pupils from each of the three morning groups. These new groups provided a combination of pupils who had participated in one of the three different faith stories and brought different perspectives and insights to the activity. The pupils were tasked with sorting a selection of words and phrases from the texts that had been read in the morning, these can be found in Appendix D. Each of the samples was read in turn and the pupils discussed which of the three texts it was most likely to have come from. Each member of the group had a different experience to draw from but did so with the

support of another pupil who had shared the morning experience. This represented a process more aligned with a traditional outworking of Scriptural Reasoning in that all three faiths were represented around a table, and alternative perspectives reviewed. Allport's guidelines for intergroup contact were used to provide a safe encounter that gave each pupil equal status. The tasks presented were collaborative and goal orientated, and an authority representative was there to act as the facilitator.

#### **5.6.5 Session 4**

The final plenary session provided an opportunity for the pupils and research team to reflect on what they had learned and to feedback their reflections. Pupils were asked to work with a partner to process their understanding and refine their thoughts. A series of questions were presented, and the pupils were given time to reflect. Having talked through their reflections the pupils had a short time to record a written response and these were collected at the end and used as evidence to improve and refine the Intervention. They were also given an opportunity to take part in a question and answer session during which the pupils could ask any remaining questions. At the end of each iteration the data was collected, analysed and separate reports were distributed to each of the schools.

### **5.7 Action Research Design -Part 2**

#### **Story Tent Evaluation and Development**

At the start of the research design I wanted to ensure that the data collected would provide the evidence needed to answer the research questions. Having read literature from several sources I found McNiff (2014) to be the most helpful in providing a research framework. Alongside McNiff I used an assessment planning sheet outlined in "The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Communicative Competence" (Deardorff, 2009). I

chose this as an appropriate tool for the use of this research as it was not only situated within the context of AR methodology but had also been devised within the discipline of ICC. I planned systematic actions to ensure I collected the relevant information at different stages of the Intervention. Details can be found in Appendix A.

I identified three goals to explore during the Intervention with a view to refining the assessment process at the end of each iterative cycle. The first goal was to gain an understanding of how schools were currently addressing the issue of intercultural experiences. To do this I applied a school document review and an initial pupil questionnaire. The second explored the pupil's on-going responses during the Intervention. To do this I used a pupil self-assessment sheet, a recorded focus group and teacher reflections at the end of each learning episode. The third provided an opportunity after the Intervention to reflect on the learning that had taken place, this was done through analysis of the data that came out of the day and follow-up pupil interviews.

### **5.7.1 First Iteration**

The first iteration took place in each of the three schools over the period of one week in October 2015. For each of the three days the team tried to maintain the same procedures in the way the material was presented and the people leading the Intervention.

At the end of the first iteration it became clear that all the participants were very positive and enthusiastic, but it was not clear whether being personally invested in the process enabled objective assessment. We decided an outside observer should be brought in to explore whether the skills and attitudes that were being observed by the research team, were also being observed by an outsider.



The team observed several of the pupils asked questions that demonstrated a desire to understand faith beyond the content of the stories. We decided to adapt the Intervention to make use of this enthusiasm and provide pupils with strategies that would enable them to develop greater insights through more systematic questioning. It was anticipated that in doing so the pupils would be able to make accurate and significant discoveries.

The structure of the day was well received so the same four-part structure was maintained but a different story was selected. The self-assessment tool was perceived as conceptually too demanding, especially for the Y5 pupils. The words “Relate” and “Interpret” were replaced with the word “Understand”. This change in the structure of the assessment sheet enabled pupils to report on five ICCs: their attitudes of Openness, Respect and Curiosity, and their ability to discover new information and to understand another perspective. These last two ICC assessment categories could be matched onto Byram’s skills to Interact and Discover; and to Interpret and Relate, and also the philosophical position of SR described by Flood, building on the use of descriptive phenomenology and interpretive hermeneutics.

### **5.7.2 Second Iteration**

The second iteration took part with the same pupils in each of the three schools six months later in April 2016, again over the period of one week. Whilst the sample size is too small to make significant comparisons, I wanted to maintain continuity in the timing of the material presented. The original research design anticipated a repeat of the Intervention as closely as possible using the three Abrahamic traditions. However, at the start of 2016 it became clear that it was not possible to secure the same team of faith representatives. After having discussed the possibility of extending SR beyond the Abrahamic traditions with team members from the CIP, it was decided to develop an Intervention which incorporated the Sikh faith tradition, an interesting new dimension to

the work which matched developments taking place within the adult SR community. The Sikh community was selected as it reflected a large community representation within the local area.

## **5.8 Methods**

In the next section I outline the methods of data collection and provide a brief explanation about why each was chosen. I close with a brief discussion into how these methods developed throughout the research program as part of the iterative cycle.

### **5.8.1 Questionnaire**

To assess the impact of the Intervention a pupil *questionnaire* was applied before and after each Intervention. The first part of the questionnaire contained a selection of open-ended questions about global perspectives and the second part considered attitudinal questions based on a five-point Likert scale. I chose the Likert scale as this provided pupils with a neutral as well as positive and negative response option. (Cohen et al., 2007, chpt 15). I wanted to collect data in a structured way that could be compared directly across the different pupils taking part, but I also wanted to provide an opportunity for pupils to communicate in more detail their perceptions using a selection of open questions

During the first and second iterations of the Story Tent Intervention I wanted to apply the questionnaire the week before and then at the end of the day to gain an indication of how the activities had impacted the pupils' perceptions. However, I found that it was too difficult in practice for the teachers to apply the questionnaire in a reliable way before the Intervention. One school had forgotten, another applied the day before and one had a last-minute change of class taking part. Consequently, I decided not to include this data

in my analysis but rather chose to use it as information to inform the development of the Intervention and as part of the pupils' ICC portfolio.

### 5.8.2 Pupil Reflexive Questionnaire

Throughout each of the sessions during the Intervention day the pupils used a self-assessment *questionnaire* to help them reflect on the skills and attitudes they were exercising in each session. They were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1 – 10 for the attitudes of Respect, Openness and Curiosity and the skills of Discovery, Interpret and Relate. I analysed their results using an Excel spreadsheet. The information was then used to create individual radar charts similar to those used by Tompenaars and Wooliams (2005) to demonstrate how pupil competences were changing during the day. It was possible to compare individual responses, which then became part of the information included in the pupils' ICC portfolio; I also used this data to prepare whole class overviews, enabling comparisons to be made across the research schools and the two iterations.

This reflexive process was not only useful for the insights it provided into the pupils' experience of the Intervention, but also as a core source of information for the AR iterative cycle. The reflexive process is an important part of developing ICC and a part of AR dynamics. Deardorff describes this when she states:

*ICC development is an ongoing process and thus it becomes important for individuals to be provided with opportunities to reflect upon and assess the development of their own ICC.*

*(Deardorff, 2009: 479)*

The information collected through the self-assessment questionnaire provided data that could be reviewed to explore the relative impact that each of the sessions had on the pupils and to analyse any changes that were taking place throughout the day. This enabled a comparison to be made between the effectiveness of the different styles of

presentation within the Intervention across the day. It was also possible to combine the findings of the pupils from each of the different classes that took part to explore the different responses across the research schools. The results from this data analysis are presented in Chapter 6.

### **5.8.3 Observed Group Work**

During the pilot Intervention, it was observed that the third session was particularly effective at providing a context where the pupils could exercise ICC through the process of the group dialogue. I decided that this would provide useful data to cross-reference against the pupils' own self-evaluations. If there was evidence of pupils demonstrating ICC through group discussion which they were also recording on their self-assessments it would strengthen the observations and provide triangulation with other data sources.

During each Intervention one of the five small discussion groups was selected to be studied in more detail and the group discussion time was recorded. Pupils were given the opportunity to withdraw if they did not feel comfortable with being recorded in line with the ethics guidelines. None of the children opted out. The recording was then transcribed and analysed for examples of ICC being exercised by the pupils. The pupils who took part in this activity were then interviewed the following day to explore further their responses.

### **5.8.4 Semi-Structured Pupil Interview – AIE**

The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (AIE) (Council of Europe, 2009) was used to gain a more detailed understanding of the pupil's perceptions of the Intervention. (See Appendix E). I wanted to be able to explore more specifically which ICC the pupils were being demonstrated as well as how the pupils had been impacted by the Intervention. The AIE provided a tool to accomplish both these objectives. It was a

structured interview, developed by the Council of Europe, which facilitated self-reflection to support an analysis of an intercultural experience.

Through a series of questions pupils are directed to different aspects of the encounter and for each of the questions there were theoretical indicators which provided possible markers for identifying ICC in the pupils' responses. The interview not only provided a framework to reflect on the event but also provides an opportunity for the pupils to demonstrate ICC through their responses. Religious encounters were identified as one possible context in which the AIE could be applied and I considered it to be helpful to my specific research questions.

#### **5.8.5 Interviews – Team Observations**

The initial assessment framework suggested that the research team should record examples of observed ICC during the day using a log book. This proved to be cumbersome as the team were heavily involved in delivering the Intervention. It was considered of more value to engage and reflect together afterwards and so the log books were removed from subsequent Interventions.

During each of the following Interventions, informal interviews were carried out at the end of each of the teaching session. They were recorded and transcribed for detailed analysis after the Intervention. There were three key focuses to these interviews. Firstly, the teachers and faith representatives were asked to share any examples of ICC that they had witnessed during the group time. Secondly, they were asked to comment on the way they perceived the pupils were engaging and participating with the Intervention itself, looking for strengths and weaknesses. Thirdly, there was an opportunity to suggest improvements to the way the Story Tent Intervention was delivered. This interview time formed the space where the insider-outsider dynamic was developed as the team shared insights as equals who were all learning together.

I became aware after the first iteration that the participants were so positive about how the pupils were interacting with the program and experiencing learning on a personal level that there may be participant bias. Because of this I decided to invite an outside observer to participate in one of the Interventions during the second iteration. They watched a morning session without the responsibility of facilitating group activities and recorded examples of observed ICC skills and attitudes. These examples were then typed up and organised into statements which reflected the 5 different competences the pupils had been self-assessing.

## **5.9 Development of a Coding Structure**

To analyse the responses of the interviews and group work I developed a coding system based on competences identified in the interview structure. I used the “Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers” (Saldana, 2016) as my source reference as it contained pragmatic guidance for qualitative data analysis.

Saldana provides a very helpful overview of coding for qualitative research and provided a framework for my coding journey. He recognises that coding is often done both during and after data collection and is therefore a dynamic and interactive process. The reflexive nature of the coding process fits well with AR methodology and the pragmatic nature and philosophical position of the research.

*Coding is a cyclical act. Rarely is the first cycle of coding data perfectly attempted. The second cycle (and possibly the third and fourth etc...) of recording further manages, filters, highlights and focuses the salient features of the qualitative data record for generating categories, themes, and concepts, grasping meaning and/ or building theory. (Saldana, 2016: 9)*

Whilst I was keen to remain objective in finding codes that would be easy to apply and maintain transferable validity, I was also aware that I did not want the analysis to be a

simple qualitative exercise comparing the numerical statistical data through SPSS analysis. This type of coding has been criticised as being reductionist in nature removing some of the rich data and the meanings embedded within the spoken language.

I have chosen to use the coding process as a tool for sorting and categorising, to look for patterns emerging and then returning to the original transcript to find the original context to enable me access to the rich thick data of the spoken words in my analysis of the findings. I wanted to combine both qualitative and quantitative aspects alongside each other. After assessing the relative advantages and disadvantages of NVivo and Atlas.ti both widely recognised CAQDAS, I decided to use Atlas.ti as a tool for processing the coding.

*CAQDAS programs are well suited for Hypothesis Coding since the proposed codes can be entered a priori into the code management systems, and their search functions can help the researcher investigate and confirm possible interrelationships among the data. (Saldana, 2016: 173)*

Saldana suggests that a pre-coding or preliminary attempt at coding should be applied which could be redefined and developed as the data informed the findings.

There has been a range of advice given about how many codes to use in this initial phase, but I have chosen to align my work with Cresswell (2013 :205) who suggests five or six codes as a lean starting point which could expand to no more than 25 to 30 categories. He recommended that these codes could then be combined into five or six major themes to focus on within the research. This is reflected in the way the coding developed.

My work was based on an investigation into a set of predetermined competences, so I chose to use hypothesis coding.

*In hypothesis-testing research, ... you go out to observe armed with a coding scheme worked out in advance. The idea is to record any instances of behaviour that conform to the items in the scheme. This allows you to see if your hunches are correct about conditions under which certain behaviours occur (Bernard, 2011 :311)*

My preliminary coding structure looked for evidence of the ten different competences highlighted in the AIE theoretical framework and can be found in the table below.

Initially I chose not apply gender or religious grammatical codes to the data analysis as these were not part of the original research design, however through the process of the analysis of the interviews these aspects became a source of interest and feature in the portfolio data.

Respect	R	Tolerates Ambiguity	TA
Openness	O	Communicative Awareness	CA
Curiosity	C	Discover and Interact	DI
Identity	I	Interpret and Relate	IR
Empathy	E	Critical Cultural Awareness	CCA

Table 6 - First set of codes applied to the AIE interviews

The initial application of the coding revealed some strengths and several weaknesses. The attitudinal competences of Respect, Openness and Curiosity were clear and easy to apply in the transcripts, as were the Empathetic statements. However, there were a huge undifferentiated number of statements within the Discover and Interact and the Communicative Awareness sections. I wanted to refine and explore in more detail what was happening within these statement categories, so I chose to apply sub-codes to each of these two categories.

Habermas (1987) has crystallised three types of human knowledge into a theory in which each type of knowledge holds value in its own right: Technical, Practical and



Emancipatory. I have chosen to apply these to the category of discovery with the intent of exploring further what kind of knowledge is being discovered. Technical knowledge is analytical and factual in nature and describes what is known. Practical knowledge is a process-based knowledge which knows how something happens, often found in skills-based learning. Emancipatory knowledge is that which knows why something happens.

The Communicative Awareness category I chose to sub-divide into Verbal and Text based comments as I wanted to investigate the impact of dialogue alongside the written word. I wanted to discover how the pupils had responded to the use of the sacred texts and how significant this had been in the encounter. I also wanted to explore the impact of the dialogue on the learning process. I chose to include a sub-category of Non-verbal communication in line with Argyle (1983) and Poyatos (1992) who had influenced Byram in the construction of his model.

From the first coding application a few themes began to appear, and I started to group the codes within themes which were linked together. The first theme consisted of attitudes which valued others. The second consisted of competences which built an understanding of the other. Within the AIE, Empathy, Identity and the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity were competences that demonstrated an ability to relativise self. I wanted to explore further the pupils' concept of identity, so I applied sub-categories which related to comments about personal identity and those of others. I was aware that not all the pupils who took part found it possible to tolerate ambiguity, so I wanted to be able to register a negative response. I also wanted to begin to apply a code that indicated the ability to notice similarities and differences, a skill often required within RE.

*Indeed there is clear evidence that, in children, the cognitive ability to attend to individual **differences** within cultural groups, and the ability to judge the deeper **similarities** between*

*cultural groups which are superficially very different, are also linked to intercultural attitudes.*

*(Council of Europe, 2009: 13)*

The final category I chose to apply was based on the aspects which related to explaining, relating and interpreting information to demonstrate an understanding of another.

*The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters has been expressly designed to encourage and foster the development of the relevant cognitive competences which are required to engage effectively with people from other cultural groups and to appreciate the value and benefits of living within culturally diverse societies. These cognitive competences include the abilities to **interpret**, **explain** and **relate** cultural information and the ability to **evaluate critically** the perspectives, practices and products of different cultural groups. (Council of Europe, 2009: 13)*

It is from these four themes and now twenty codes that I chose to apply to the transcripts at the end of the first iteration.

<b>Attitudes</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Discover and Interact skills</b>	<b>Codes</b>
Respect	AR	Discover <i>technical</i> knowledge	DT
Openness	AO	Discover <i>practical</i> knowledge	DP
Curiosity	AC	Discover <i>emancipatory</i> knowledge	DE
<b>Shared Understanding</b>		Communicative awareness <i>verbal</i>	CV
Identity awareness - self	IS	Communicative awareness <i>non-verbal</i>	CN
Identity awareness - other	IO	Communicative awareness <i>written</i>	CW
Empathy	EM	<b>Cognitive Skills</b>	
Compares similarities	CS	Interpret	CI
Compares differences	CD	Explain	CE
Tolerates Ambiguity (Accepts uncertainty)	TA +ve	Relate	CR
Struggles to Tolerate Ambiguity (Looks for quick solutions)	TA -ve	Critical Cultural Awareness	CCA

Table 7- Second set of codes applied to the AIE interviews

The second application of the coding again had strengths and weaknesses. The first weakness I encountered was that there were too many codes with the letter “C”, which made using the codes difficult to differentiate and was confusing. The attitude codes were clear to apply but I wanted to clarify specific key words associated with each code to ensure internal consistency. These are listed in table 7 along with other key word descriptors used to indicate a competence.

I wanted to maintain an element of objectivity to the coding process, so I applied a moderation process before the final application of the codes to the data set. I asked two of the research team and one outside observer who had recently completed a PhD in the social sciences to code an AIE interview and then compared the results to identify key words that could be applied across the transcripts to develop internal consistency.

I chose to combine some of the sub-codes for this second coding round. I decided that looking for similarities and differences could be described as the ability to relate and merged these three sections into the one category, that of relating and I chose to combine the two Identity categories into one category. I was keen to maintain the differentiated sub-codes for tolerating ambiguity and I was aware that this use of a negative code could prove useful in other competences.

When I found negative examples of ICC I recorded them separately in the coding schema. I was aware of the potential for participant bias in AR methodology and I wanted to find a way to record negative responses as well positive ones. I chose to assign a new theme to this group of competences as I felt it was a better fit and have described the competences of Identity, Empathy and to Tolerate Ambiguity as relational competences.

The revised sub-codes for Communicative Awareness section and for the Discover and Interact section provided useful insights into the pupils' responses. There were many cases of codes within this themed section and the comments revealed different aspects of the encounter. I decided to divide these two dimensions and apply separate themes.

In coding for the discovery section, I was particularly aware of evidence of descriptive phenomenological aspects in the pupils' comments. I was also aware that some of the information the pupils talked about indicated that they were either misremembering or

holding onto information that was not correct. In these incidents I recorded it as a negative discovery in the coding scheme.

The codes used within the cognitive section of the coding schema provided interesting information about the interpretative hermeneutic dimension to the learning. Most of the children were able to explain and relate their learning but I found there were far fewer examples of interpreting and critical cultural awareness that suggested there may be a hierarchical dimension to this section.

I chose to apply “Blooms’ Taxonomy” to the analysis of this section. While Bloom’s Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) is not the only framework for reflecting on higher order thinking it has been widely accepted and used as a basis for assessment metrics. His model suggests six levels of thinking from the simplest to the most complex and it is generally accepted that each level needs to be mastered before the next one can take place. For the purposes of this research I consider only the first three levels and apply them to the cognitive developmental aspects of the ICC outlined in the AIE.

The first level of *knowledge* was applied to the explaining and relating of the information in the interviews. The second level of *comprehension* can be applied to the interpreting of information and the third level of *application* applied to the skill of critical cultural awareness which demonstrates pupils’ ability to apply what they have learnt into new cultural contexts. This final coding framework was used on all of the transcribed interviews and used as a method to make comparisons. This framework can be seen below and also referenced later in Appendix H.

<b>ICC Attitudes</b>	<b>Cd</b>	<b>Keys words:</b>
1. Respect	AR	Listening, respect,
2. Openness	AO	Enjoyed, open, learn more...
3. Curiosity	AC	Interested, curious, excited, asked questions
<b>ICC Relational</b>		
4. Identity awareness – self/ other	IS/O	Mention of religious, geographical or personal aspects of identity.
5. Empathy	EM	Describes how another person felt.
6. Tolerates Ambiguity	TA	Able to accept different opinions
<b>ICC Communicative Awareness</b>		
7. Verbal	CAV	Comments on things said during Intervention
8. Non-verbal	CAN	Comments on nonverbal clues
9. Text based – written word	CAT	Comments on text or reading or language
<b>ICC – Discover and Interact</b> (Finding out new information)		
10. <i>Technical</i> knowledge	DT	Knowing that...( Information)
11. <i>Practical</i> knowledge	DP	Knowing how...( Process of learning)
12. <i>Emancipatory</i> knowledge	DE	New knowing ...( Wow moment!)
<b>ICC – Interpret and Relate</b> (Processing new information)		
13. Explain	SE	Make clear, describe in detail, give a reason
14. Relate	SR	Show a connection between texts or life experiences.
15. Interpret	SI	Explain the meaning, understand particular significance.
16. Critical Cultural Awareness	CCA	Evaluate critical practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

Table 8 - Third set of codes applied to the AIE interviews

For each of the AIE interviews I created a proforma that included the number of examples of each competence identified with the statements in place. This enabled me to gain a greater insight into the sort of comments each participant was making and how often they were making them. Whilst this is primarily a qualitative research project I wanted to as objective as possible allowing a negative as well as positive code.

### **5.10 Case Study – ICC Portfolio**

Case study has been considered a methodology in its own right (Hartas, 2010, chpt 10), but I have used it as a method of data collection within AR methodology in the form described by Cohen and Manion (2007, chpt 11). They propose that case studies can help the researcher to focus on individuals or groups to build an understanding of the way events happen in specific contexts. I wanted to explore how the pupils responded in different contexts. If they were self-assessing themselves as competent in one area and then modelling it in another during the group dialogue it would strengthen the case that a competence was in fact securely being demonstrated. I created portfolios of work for the AIE participants and brought together evidence from not only the AIE interviews, but also the findings from the focus group and the various questionnaires completed as part of the Intervention. This holistic approach to assessment fits well with models of ICC assessment particularly those advocated by both Byram and Deardorff who suggest a multidimensional review. These case studies form the basis of reviewing the way ICC are demonstrated through the “Story Tent” Intervention. A summary of the points of data collection for each of the 17 case study pupils can be found in Appendix F. The results from this data are discussed in Chapter 7.

To help process the information collected within the portfolio, I chose to create a visual representation of each of the case study pupils using Lego bricks. A photograph of these

can be found in the Appendix G. For each pupil I created a Lego character which was encoded to represent different aspects of competences that had been observed.

I chose Lego pieces which represented the school (leg colour) and the gender (body colour) of each of the pupils. The heads were chosen to indicate some aspects of the character of the pupil to create a basic figure. The different themes were represented by bricks of different colours and these were then used to create a tower on which the characters could stand. White for attitudes, yellow for relationships, red for communication, blue for discovery, grey for skills and black for critical cultural awareness. The size of brick represented the level of competence demonstrated, a 2x2 brick indicated some competence, a 2x3 brick represented good competence and a 2x4 brick demonstrated significant evidence of competence. Negative codes were represented by turning the brick forward, faith position was coded using a letter either C/M/S, the ability to tolerate ambiguity was indicated through a blue dot and the ability to interpret a white dot. These Lego representations were helpful in that they created an overview of the pupils' collections of competences. Whilst not a traditional academic methodology, I have included it in this section as an innovative strategy to visualise patterns of data: it was of assistance in reflecting on the coding outcomes revealed by the AIE, and provoking reflections on both individual responses and collective patterns.

## **5.11 Ethical Considerations**

Research Ethics were based on the Warwick University guidelines, BERA guidelines, and recommendations highlighted by Richard Winter (1987). Attention was given to ensuring the continued voluntary nature of participation, and consultation with relevant experts from religious and educational backgrounds. Each school that participated applied their own ethical codes and in line with best practice, care was taken regarding confidentiality, with all retained and published data anonymised. Details can be found in Appendix J.



## 5.12 Summary

In this Chapter I present a case for using AR methodology to explore the research questions. I outline the thinking that was applied to the development of the Story Tent Intervention, firstly through the process of synthesising theory into practice and secondly through a phase of implementation, evaluation and development.

I describe the methods used to collect the data and an overview of the research process which developed over the pilot Intervention and the following two iterations of the Story Tent. I make particular reference to the development of the coding system and the significance of the collection of a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate examples of pupils' ICC. The results from the data collection phase are presented in the next two chapters.

## **6 FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVENTION**

In Chapter 6 I will provide an overview of the findings from the pilot project and the subsequent two iterations of the Story Tent Intervention. Throughout the school-based work two questions were consistently applied to assess the impact of the Intervention.

1 - Which ICC (if any) were being exercised during the Story Tent Intervention?

2 - How does the Story Tent Intervention encourage (enable) pupils to exercise ICC?

As a research team we wanted to observe which competences were being demonstrated and how the Story Tent activities were enabling or inhibiting the pupils' responses. We wanted to use this information to implement changes to the Intervention as we responded to observed behaviours. We also wanted to ensure that any such changes reflected the core principles of SR. As the primary researcher I had the final authority to determine the evolution of the Intervention. Comments are used to illustrate the findings and pupil quotes are referred to by their pseudonyms, while research team members' quotes are referred to using a code which can be found in Appendix F.

### **6.1 Introduction**

Since AR methodology follows a cyclical pattern, I have reported on each of the Interventions chronologically. I have chosen to consider each of the Interventions separately rather than as part of a longitudinal study since there were many variables at work and it would be difficult to draw significant conclusions about development over time and causality from such a small sample size. Rather my interest is in the way the children are able to exercise and identify ICC at the time of the intervention and in their reflections on the intervention. I have provided a description of the data from the three different research schools and I have identified questions at the end of each section for further exploration in subsequent Interventions. The first section of the Chapter presents

a report of the pilot Intervention, the second and third sections present the findings of the subsequent Story Tent Interventions, with the fourth section providing an outline of the initial findings. I explore these in more detail in Chapter 7.

I have outlined a summary of the data collected during each Intervention. Each section comprises a description of the setting, the findings from the pupil self-assessment sheets, the group discussion transcript, observed reflections from the research team and an overview of the competences demonstrated through the AIE. Details of the coding structure can be found in Appendix H. Competences have been capitalised when referring to the specific AIE coding structure, for example the attitude of curiosity when used to demonstrate ICC will be written as Curiosity.

## **6.2 Pilot Intervention**

### **6.2.1 Setting**

The pilot study took place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 with a class of 30 Y6 pupils at Smalltown Community School. It was a class I had worked with before and knew well. The aim of the pilot Story Tent day was to explore the viability of using SR with primary pupils and to test out the tools and methods planned in the research design. I chose to present the story of Noah from the Christian, Jewish and Muslim faith tradition, and structured the Intervention in a series of four sessions spread over a single classroom day.

### **6.2.2 Trial Questionnaire**

I initially wanted to gain a baseline assessment for the pupils participating in the research. Pupils were asked to complete a questionnaire which was based on the ten ICC outlined in the AIE. I chose to use a five-point Likert scale to gauge the positive or negative strength of the pupil's perception whilst still allowing a neutral response (1 strongly

agree, 2 agree, 3 not sure, 4 disagree, 5 strongly disagree.). The questionnaire was completed at the start of the day and then again at the end to explore the impact of the Intervention. Questions were phrased using clear, positive, unambiguous statements: for example, *“I find it easy to listen to the ideas of others with respect.”* The pupils circled one of the numbers on the Likert scale between 1 and 5 to indicate their response. The pupils’ initial engagement with the questionnaire suggested that it was too complex and needed to be revised before the Autumn Intervention. The format of the questionnaire was too text-based and appeared to be more complicated than necessary. The pupils also struggled with the concept of the Likert scale, in some cases even completing it in reverse presuming that 1 meant strongly disagree and 5 meant strongly agree. I realised I had assumed a left to right orientation which had caused some confusion. We decided that a future questionnaire did not need to consider all the competences and would focus on a smaller selection of competences, bearing in mind that other assessment tools were also being used to broaden the range of observations.

### **6.2.3 Trial Self-Assessment Sheet**

The self-assessment sheet required pupils to reflect on their attitudes and skills at the end of each of the three taught sessions. Pupils were asked to reflect on their learning and to rate how well they felt they were demonstrating ICC on a scale of 1 – 10. The attitudes assessed were Respect, Openness and Curiosity; and skills assessed were Discovering, Relating and Interpreting information. The group facilitators supported their pupils during these self-assessments. The pupils also had the opportunity to reflect on one aspect of the session that they wanted to remember to further embed their learning. Overall, this assessment process was well received, and the pupils were able to reflect and discuss their learning in small groups and complete the self-assessment independently.

This tool was helpful in that it not only provided space for reflexive learning but also maintained a focus on the ICC as a core part of the learning.

#### **6.2.4 Trial Reflections**

At the end of the Intervention day we asked the pupils to reflect on the day's activities and consider which aspects had gone well and which could be improved. From these written comments I became aware that the pupils felt that the first session was too long and had too much listening with new information to remember. During the second session, the pupils perceived the drama and storytelling activities as very effective with almost all the pupils recalling this as one of the best parts of the day. During the third session I was impressed with the depth of insight and religious literacy the pupils were exhibiting and felt frustrated that this had not been captured for further detailed analysis. I decided to record and transcribe this session to further explore how pupils demonstrated ICC competences through interactions with each other. At the end of this pilot Intervention, I had given the pupils the opportunity to ask any remaining unanswered questions. Although this had not originally been part of the Intervention, it was clear from the pupils' engagement with the research team that such an opportunity was helpful. I decided that future iterations should incorporate this aspect as it provided an extended opportunity for pupils to further develop and demonstrate their ICC, and to resolve any unanswered questions.

#### **6.2.5 Trial Adult Reflections**

During the pilot Intervention the research team kept a record of observed ICC on a formatted sheet. I hoped that this would be an aide memoire to focus attention and document the behaviours taking place during the Intervention. This however proved to be difficult to complete whilst maintaining the teaching programme. Instead, the team decided to use the time spent with the pupils to engage fully with the facilitation process

and then reflect afterwards in an informal semi-structured group interview. I subsequently analysed a transcription of this interview to obtain data on team observations.

### **6.2.6 Data Collection Revisions**

As a consequence of the findings from the pilot study several revisions were made to the data collection process. I developed a more age appropriate questionnaire which focused on the attitudinal competences of Respect, Openness, Curiosity and the skills of Discovering, Relating and Interpreting. A simple set of six questions were presented with a visual rather than numeric representation on a five-point Likert scale.

Instead of using written observations the research team decided we would review each session at the end through an informal interview session to reflect on the research questions. This review was recorded and later transcribed to record the adult observations of how the pupils were responding to the Intervention.

I chose to keep the self-assessment sheet the same. It had been well received by the pupils, acting not only as a useful teaching tool, but also provided a significant amount of data on pupils' perceptions of their learning.

The pilot Intervention revealed an unexpected depth of religious literacy during the afternoon session. We decided that one of the five groups from this activity should be recorded and transcribed to provide evidence of ICC worked out in practice, and that the pupils from this group would take part in a follow up AIE interview the day after the Intervention. I did not trial the AIE interview at the pilot school as it was a tool I had experience of using during my MA.

This information formed the basis of a case study folder for each of the pupils participating in the follow up work. The transcript of the pupils AIE, the group activity

session and the adult observations were all entered into Atlas.ti; a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software program (CAQDAS) which provided a systematic database to process the coding analysis of the transcripts. This enabled some standardising of codes to ensure there was consistency across the transcripts.

### **6.3 First Action Research Intervention – The Story of Noah**

#### **6.3.1 1AR1: First Intervention, St Village School**

The first Intervention took place on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015 with an AR team consisting of five adults working with the RE classroom teacher and a class of 26 Y6 pupils. The revised Noah Story Tent Intervention was delivered through the Christian, Muslim and Jewish faith perspectives within this Warwickshire Church of England village school. It was the first time the newly-formed research team had worked together. The team noticed that during the day some of the pupils found it difficult to complete their self-assessment sheets as they didn't fully appreciate the different meanings of "Interpret" and "Relate". These are complex concepts and I decided to remove these two ICC from the assessment sheet for the following two Interventions which were with younger Y5 pupils, instead just choosing to focus on the four remaining ICC.

#### **6.3.2 1AR2: First Intervention, Smalltown Community School.**

The second delivery of this Intervention took place on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015 with an AR team consisting of five adults working with the classroom teacher and a class of 30 Y5 pupils. CF1 was unable to attend on this day and so CF2 took the lead in the group work. The Noah Story Tent day was delivered in this non-denominational community school based in a small town in Warwickshire working with faith representatives from the Christian, Muslim and Jewish traditions. The Intervention was presented as closely as possible to its first delivery, with only two minor changes. The

self-assessment sheet consisted of just four ICC rather than six and an alternate Christian faith representative stood in to cover an unexpected absence.

### **6.3.3 1AR3: First Intervention, Middlecity Academy**

The third Intervention took place on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2015 with the original team of five adults working with the classroom teacher and a class of 30 Y5 pupils. The Noah Story Tent day was delivered in this multicultural faith academy based in an inner-city school working with faith representatives from the Christian, Muslim and Jewish traditions. The Intervention was presented as closely as possible to the previous Interventions with two minor changes. The day was originally planned to be delivered with the RE specialist and her Y6 class, however due to an unforeseen clash of commitments the school suggested that we could work with the Y5 class instead. The second change (as in Smalltown) was to the self-assessment sheet, which again consisted of just four ICC instead of the six used in St Village.

### **6.3.4 Data Analysis of Self-Assessment - Intervention 1**

The results of the self-assessment sheets from the 86 pupils who took part were collected at the end of the Intervention and the data entered in to an Excel spreadsheet. The information collected in the three schools provided an overview of how the Intervention had been received by the pupils. The averages for each of the ICC assessed has been calculated and displayed in the table below. Each school had an average score across each of the first three sessions during the day. The results have been displayed separately to observe whether there were any corresponding patterns in the pupils' responses to the three different Interventions.



1st AR (1AR)	School 1 St Village (1AR1)			School 2 Smalltown (1AR2)			School 3 Middlecity (1AR3)		
	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Curiosity	6.7	8.9	8.5	8.9	8.7	8.6	8.6	8.7	8.5
Respect	8.2	9.0	9.0	7.7	8.7	8.0	7.6	8.8	7.9
Open	8.3	9.7	8.9	8.9	8.4	7.8	9.0	8.4	7.9
Discovery	6.1	8.8	8.8	9.1	9.7	9.1	9.2	9.2	8.7
Interpret	7.7	8.7	8.7	X	X	X	X	X	X
Relate	7.5	7.7	7.5	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 9 – Self-assessment summary from 1AR

The pupils in St Village School recorded an increased average score in five of the competences assessed over the day, with the sixth competence (the ability to Relate) remaining unchanged. There was a noticeable increase in scores for the three attitudes of Curiosity, Respect and Openness over the course of the day. This might imply that pupils were developing a positive attitude towards those from a different faith background. Pupils were most Open during the second session, the drama activity. The most marked changes were in Curiosity (which rose from 6.7 to 8.5) and Discovery (which rose from 6.1 to 8.8). This could perhaps indicate a link between pupil Curiosity and Discovery. The overall high score responses across the sessions indicated that the pupils had encountered a positive experience of the Story Tent day.

The pupils at Smalltown Community School scored themselves at the upper end of the scale throughout the day. There was a slight increase in Respect, a slight decrease in Curiosity and Openness, whilst Discovery remained constant. There was little differentiation in the responses given by the pupils across the activities, which makes it difficult to draw conclusions. Nevertheless, the pupils' high self-assessment scores suggest that they engaged positively throughout the day.

The pupils at Middlecity Academy recorded similar result to those from Smalltown Community School. They scored themselves highly across the different competences and across the different sessions, which again made it difficult to differentiate. There was a slight increase in Respect by the end of the day and a slight decrease in Curiosity and Discovery, with a more marked drop in Openness, from 9.0 at the start of the day to 7.9 at the end. The team felt that pupils were rating themselves highly to give themselves good marks rather than to indicate a self-reflective interpretation of their responses to the activities.

The results from the data above suggest that the pupils who took part in the first Story Tent Intervention had a positive experience of the day. The second session appeared to be well received across all three schools, with particularly high ratings for Discovery of 8.8, 9.7 and 9.2 across the three schools. The responses from the Y5 classes at Smalltown Community School and Middlecity Academy did not provide much differentiation in their feedback and so it made it difficult to draw conclusions about changes that were happening during the day. The research team decided that for the next iteration more time should be allocated to explaining how to use the self-assessments scales. We wanted to reinforce that the pupils were not being measured through this tool but rather that it was a way of helping the research team to improve the activities for other children who might participate in the future.

### **6.3.5 Data Analysis from Group Findings - Intervention 1**

The group activity from the third session of the Story Tent day was recorded and transcribed. The table below contains the information that came out of the coding analysis of the transcript. Each of the 16 different ICC codes can be found across the top of the table and these can be found in Appendix H. The total number of incidents of that competence being demonstrated in the transcript is presented for each of the three

schools. Each competence has a total score in the bottom row of the table to indicate which competences were demonstrated most frequently. A total for each school has been registered in the final column of the table to indicate how the different schools encountered the activity. The aim of this analysis was to explore which of the ICC were being exercised in the process of sorting texts through the group dialogue. Comments which demonstrated a negative competence such as a misunderstanding or negative attitude were recorded as a negative score and the totals reflect the summary of the positive and negative comments together

1st AR (1AR)	Attitudes			Relational			Communicat'n			Discovery			Skills			CCA	Total	
	AR	AO	AC	Id	Em	TA	CV	CN	CT	DT		DP	DE	SE	SR			SI
										+	-							
School 1 (1AR1)	1	0	0	1	0	1	11	3	12	4	1	0	1	12	9	7	0	61
School 2 (1AR2)	0	0	0	1	0	0	14	3	29	1		0	1	12	19	1	0	81
School 3 (1AR3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	4	15	4		0	0	12	23	3	0	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>211</b>	

Table 10 - 1AR Coding data from group 3 session transcripts

The group discussion which took place at St Village School indicated good levels of Communicative Awareness with equal numbers of comments demonstrating both verbal and text awareness. Pupils demonstrated evidence of cognitive skills and were able to Explain, Relate and Interpret their findings. There were very few comments from the pupils during the discussion that demonstrated attitudinal or relational competences. New Discoveries were discussed, although one comment indicated a misunderstanding of a religious concept.

A more detailed examination of the transcript revealed that pupils used phrases they had heard and actions they had seen during the drama to help their discussions. They also noticed key words that were associated with the different faith traditions such as 'cease,'

'lawless' and 'disbelievers.' Three of the pupils discussed in detail the effect translation would have on the meaning and noticed that whilst these texts were originally written in different languages the translation process may have involved loss of meaning.

They also noticed factual differences in the stories: for example, that one of Noah's sons did not get on the ark in the Quran whilst all three sons did in the Bible and the Torah. The dove and rainbow were also missing from the Quran, where the story ends with evil being swallowed-up. This in-depth discussion enabled pupils to suggest interpretations of what they had learnt in the light of their experiences.

The group discussion that took place at Smalltown Community School indicated pupils were exercising Communicative Awareness in a different way to those at St Village. The transcript contained around the same number of comments with reference to verbal clues but almost double the number of comments involving references to clues embedded in the text. This group repeatedly drew from information linked to the written word in helping them to differentiate between different faith traditions. The skills they used reflected an ability to Relate with fewer Interpretations than the first school. There was little evidence of attitudinal or relational competences being discussed, and few Discoveries were reported, although one pupil did experience an emancipatory moment.

A more detailed examination of the transcript revealed that pupils were confident in using religious vocabulary to process their thinking. They were able to relate personal experiences of faith and the experience of the Story Tent to Explain their thinking.

During the group session Helen began to recognise the difference between believers and non-believers, which appeared to be a new concept to her. The pupils noticed that there were many similarities between the Bible and the Torah. They recognised the importance of key words and phrases that helped them distinguish between the different texts and noticed that the Quran contained lots of speech in it in a way that the other texts did not.

The discussion within the group was very respectful and honest. One pupil said “...*first of all I agree with those two, with their point of view.*” Such comments demonstrated levels of Respect and Openness being worked out within the activity.

The group discussion that took place at Middlecity Academy indicated that pupils demonstrated Communicative Awareness through their references to both verbal and text clues. They were particularly good at Relating their experiences to what they knew, and new Discoveries were mentioned as part of the discussion. No attitudinal or relational competences were discussed during the activity, but they did collaborate to complete the task.

A more detailed examination of the transcript revealed that the pupils initially needed encouragement to engage in the activity. Pupils gave quick answers such as “it’s the Bible”, “it’s the Torah” or “it’s the Quran” without explaining their thinking. As the session developed they became interested in the meaning of some key words such as ‘Lord,’ ‘God’ and ‘Covenant,’ and became particularly interested in how disbelievers and lawlessness could be compared.

*...it's like disbelievers you don't believe in something and lawless is something like being bad*  
(Shazad)

They also drew on their experiences of reading the words and watching the drama to help them place words and phrases within different faith traditions.

These findings suggest that this activity enabled pupils to exercise Communicative Awareness through the group discussion and that through the discussions they were able to exercise the cognitive skills associated with ICC. The text was a key piece of evidence used and the pupils were able to Relate these to each other to complete the task. Some of the comments in the transcripts indicate the discussion pushed pupils’ understanding and

helped them to develop deeper insights. It is interesting to note that Smalltown Community School scored particularly highly in this activity, possibly suggesting that this is a style of learning with which they are familiar and comfortable.

### **6.3.6 Data Analysis from Adult Observations - Intervention 1**

At the end of each of the teaching sessions the research team drew together to reflect on the competences they had observed in the pupils and on how the Story Tent had encouraged the pupils to exercise these competences. The table below contains the findings from these transcripts and matches the format of the table above. The 16 ICC competences are listed across the top of the table and for each school is recorded in the first column. A breakdown of each of the session findings is listed for each school.

Whilst every effort was taken to get together to discuss each session, this was not always possible. At Middlecity Academy the teacher was on playground duty in the afternoon and not able to participate. As a result, I delayed the final interview to incorporate sessions three and four together. The total number of competences recorded is totalled for each session at each school in the final column. Again, any negative competences were recorded and subtracted from the total scores.

1st AR (1AR)	Attitudes						Relational			Communicat'n			Discovery			Skills			CCA	Total	
	AR		AO		AC		Id	Em	TA	CV	CN	CT	DT		DP	DE	SE	SR			SI
	+	-	+	-	+	-							+	-							
<b>School 1 (1AR1)</b>																					
1	3		4		8		1	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	26
2	8		0		5		15	7	0	23	0	3	4	2	2	0	0	15	2	1	87
3	0		0		1		1	0	0	3	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	20
4	2		7		13		2	0	0	3	0	9	6	4	0	8	0	11	1	1	66
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>27</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>199</b>	
<b>School 2 (1AR2)</b>																					
1	9		2		5		0	0	0	2	0	7	1	0	0	0	0	7	3	0	36
2	1	1	3		5		2	0	0	6	1	3	1	1	0	2	17	4	0	0	45
3	3		4	1	6		0	0	0	7	0	8	0	1	0	1	3	4	0	0	36
4	4		6		9	2	1	0	0	3	0	8	4	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>157</b>	
<b>School 3 (1AR3)</b>																					
1	0		1	1	6	6	0	0	0	6	1	34	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	47
2	3		8		11		5	0	0	11	0	6	0	0	1	0	4	0	4	0	53
3 & 4	0	1	2		4		0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>10</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>114</b>	

Table 11 – 1AR Coding data from adult observation transcripts

From the start of the Intervention it was evident that the class from St Village School consisted of pupils who were confident and comfortable with the experience of intercultural encounters. They engaged fully in the programme and asked questions. There was a marked increase in Curiosity during the day and this was reflected in the final session in which pupils asked some probing and pertinent questions demonstrating Respect towards people of other faiths. For example:

*I think someone asked me, do you know God and how do you know God ... they had very good levels of criticality in them. (CFR1)*

The adults observed that during session 2 and 4 pupils were demonstrating Critical Cultural Awareness and that some of the pupils were able to engage with the activities even when they did not believe the subject matter being discussed. There was a clear understanding of Identity which was particularly noticeable in the drama session.

Comments the team made during the Intervention suggest that they had observed pupils were able to suspend judgement and continue to be open to explore different interpretations.

*They asked me some very specific questions which were obvious that they don't believe in, but they know we have a different belief and when I was telling them they were listening (MFR2)*

The drama session was particularly effective at enabling pupils to exercise a range of competences with 87 comments that demonstrated ICC. Pupils at this school were particularly effective at verbal communication and Relating their experiences and forming Interpretations. The class teacher commented on the fact that this class had been involved with a debating competition the previous term and that she had worked with the class to develop these questioning skills and this was evident in the number of questions and the depth of enquiry demonstrated.

The class teacher observed behaviours that were different from the normal classroom expectations. The style of learning had impacted pupils in unexpected ways.

*...there were quite a few who put their hands up today who usually don't and some who usually come up with the most bizarre questions, who actually came up with much more sensible questions. (ST1)*

During the final session the adults observed high levels of Curiosity (13) and Interpretation (11), and a high overall score of 66. It was evident from the pupils' questions that they had embraced the experience and wanted to know more.

The Intervention at Smalltown Community School was received differently. The team observed a difference in the maturity levels of the Y5 pupils at Smalltown Community School in comparison to the Y6 class at St Village School. For example, when asked if they had noticed any differences, the responses made by the Y5 pupils tended to be more



literal. When asked if he had noted any differences, one pupil picked up on the fact that different groups had different animal masks which was based on the different hats supplied in the prop bag rather than content of the story.

The team observed that the pupils used key words and grammatical clues such as capital letters to help them sort texts in the afternoon session and this matched evidence from the AIE data and the group transcripts indicating literacy skills were being applied to the RE context. The Jewish faith representative noted that:

*... they were very interested in the grammar as well, so why was it a capital M for Me when it was God saying Me and things like that they picked up on and why is Lord in capitals and things like that that they picked up on which was slightly confusing. (JFR1)*

The class teacher, who was familiar with the group dynamics of the pupils, commented on the engagement of unexpected pupils as had been experienced in St Village School. She observed:

*I noticed some of the children who contributed were some of the ones who were perhaps normally quieter in class and actually some of the children who I would have expected to be saying quite a lot were quite quiet, so there was an interesting balance of discussion really. (ST2)*

The team commented on the effectiveness of the second session to facilitate a collaborative approach, which enabled pupils to demonstrate a range of ICC worked out in practical ways through the drama activity.

*I think they really enjoyed the acting, and they really enjoyed the role plays, they were very enthusiastic about taking on the role of a character, and then doing it well and there was a lot of co-ordination among them as well. (MFR2)*

Pupils demonstrated Respect, Openness and Curiosity as they worked together and engaged both with the faith representative and their fellow classmates to produce a

dramatic interpretation of the story they had heard. Again, an increase in Curiosity was observed over the day. Although a couple of negative comments reflected a difficult start to the question and answer session (Q&A), once the pupils understood the expectations of a Q&A style of learning they asked interesting questions which related to what they had experienced during the day. They asked different types of questions to those asked at St Village School. For example, they tended to ask questions which addressed all three team members to gain comparative insights, whilst the pupils at St Village had specific questions to ask individuals for clarification and understanding to Interpret rather than to Relate their insights.

The team observed more resistance to the Story Tent Intervention in Middlecity Academy. During the first group session there was a mixed response to the initial text work. This was reflected in the high score of comments made under the text Communicative Awareness section. The team were concerned that the level of literacy might impact the pupils' ability to engage with the activities. It was felt that perhaps some of the vocabulary might have been too stretching and a barrier to the pupils' understanding. Again, the issue of maturity was raised and there seemed to be more resistance to learning in the initial stages of the Intervention whilst using the texts:

*I would say the level of curiosity is definitely lesser than at the other two schools. (MFR2)*

*To give an example of a conversation I overheard with one of the first activities, was it about your favourite book, story and one of the kids, the boy sitting next to me was saying I have never read a story to the end. I've read books, but I have never read one from start to finish.*

*(MFR1)*

However, this attitude changed significantly in the second session when the children were given the opportunity to work together to create a drama presentation. The team

observations noted that the Curiosity and verbal Communicative Awareness went up during this time as the collaborative presentations of the story of Noah were prepared.

*RS: I was just, I was just overwhelmed*

*ST3: Yes, you have tapped into their talent*

The research team also reported conversations that reflected an interest in the geographical nature of religious identity indicating a cultural awareness that had not been evident at the other two schools. They were more familiar with diversity of pupils' backgrounds and so appeared more able to engage with cultural issues raised through the encounter.

*There was a Somalian boy who has left now, but they said he wasn't a Muslim. So, we discussed that you know it is not just people from Pakistan who are Muslim, do you know what I mean you can be any creed, colour, race and be a Muslim you know. But I think sometimes you feel a bit nervous about having those kinds of conversations because, but we just go for it you know we say they are their opinions and we talk about it and they end up having some really good discussions. (ST3)*

The comments from these observations indicated that the drama session was particularly well received, and the team were keen to build on the success of this in future Interventions. The impact of questions was observed as significant and it was decided to try to build a teaching element into the next Intervention which could help pupils to develop these skills.

### **6.3.7 Data Analysis from AIE Interviews - Intervention 1**

The day after the Intervention, each of the pupils who took part in the group session had the opportunity to be interviewed using an AIE semi-structured interview. I was not able to be present to complete the interviews at AR2 and so the class teaching assistant

conducted these interviews after being trained to use it consistently. The table below presents the coding data from the pupils' AIE interviews. Negative comments are recorded in the same way as for the previous data sources. The 16 ICC competences are listed in the top row and the pupils listed in the first column. The findings from the AIE are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, but the data is displayed, and the context briefly described in this Chapter.

1st AR (1AR)	Attitudes						Relational			Communicat'n			Discovery			Skills			CCA	Total	
	AR		AO		AC		Id	Em	TA	CV	CN	CT	DT		DP	DE	SE	SR			SI
	+	-	+	-	+	-							+	-							
<b>School 1 (1AR1)</b>																					
Alice	3	2	5	6	3	0	5	1	2	7	0	0	2	6	1	0	43				
Paul	0	6	2	2	4	1	3	0	2	5	1	0	0	3	6	0	33				
Luke	2	4	3	0	2	2	5	3	2	3	1	1	3	4	3	0	38				
George	0	1	7	2	1	0	3	1	2	5	0	0	4	4	1	0	31				
Lucy	0	4	4	5	2	0	7	0	0	1	4	0	5	1	1	0	34				
<b>School 2 (1AR2)</b>																					
Harvey	4	3	4	2	5	0	3	0	2	4	3	1	0	1	4	0	30				
Mark	2	1	4	1	3	1	3	0	1	5	1	0	2	5	0	0	29				
Joy	1	0	2	1	5	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	17				
Ruby	3	2	4	2	5	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	7	0	0	30				
Helen	2	3	5	2	4	1	4	0	2	0	0	4	1	0	0	1	26				
Tom	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
<b>School 3 (1AR3)</b>																					
Aamir	1	0	3	1	5	1	1	0	4	0	0	4	1	1	0	3	2	0	0	21	
Zainab	3	5	4	5	2	4	11	1	4	5	1	0	4	4	0	1	54				
Sumera	1	1	1	4	4	1	9	0	3	3	1	2	0	3	4	1	37				
Susan	4	2	4	3	4	0	6	0	2	3	1	0	4	9	0	0	42				
Shazad	2	0	0	4	5	0	4	0	1	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	23				
Jamila	2	3	1	4	4	3	7	0	7	8	2	1	7	4	0	0	53				

Table 12 - 1AR Coding data from AIE transcripts

In St Village School, five pupils took part in the AIE interview during the lunchtime break on the following day. Two of the pupils who had been part of the group discussion did not wish to participate in the interviews. This highlighted the importance of valuing the interviews at subsequent Interventions and explaining what was involved to ensure that pupils were confident in what was expected. One pupil (Lucy) volunteered to

participate in the AIE interview, although she had not participated in the first group activity.

The interviews at this school revealed that all the pupils demonstrated Openness, Curiosity and Empathy. They also demonstrated more examples of comments indicating the ability to Interpret. It would be interesting to explore further what factors might influence this. This class was a very able Y6 class, and the strong demonstration of Interpretive skills might arise from a conceptual hierarchy within the skills considered, or alternatively might be linked to the ethos of the school.

In Smalltown School, five pupils took part in the AIE and group work and overall there were slightly fewer examples of competences demonstrated. Pupils were good at recognising Identity markers, were Empathetic towards the story tellers and were good at Explaining what they had done. However, two of the pupils recounted misinformation about religion. For example, Harvey referred to the story of Joseph a couple of times rather than the story of Noah.

Joy and Mark demonstrated the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity. Helen used statements which indicated negative Curiosity: for example, when she was asked if she would like to know any more about the faith representative's religion she said "...er not really." The pupils at this school were good at using the text, noticing capital letters and identifying key words.

In Middlecity Academy, six pupils took part in the AIE interview and the overall scores were higher than in both the previous schools. Examples of comments relating to attitudes were less common during the interviews, but a good level of Empathy was present in all of those interviewed. Half the pupils expressed a willingness to Tolerate Ambiguity and all the pupils demonstrated good levels of verbal Communicative Awareness. The pupils demonstrated higher levels of Explaining, Relating and Critical

Cultural Awareness. They also were more likely to make comments about the process of learning Practical Discovery with five of the six pupils relating to this aspect of Discovery. It would be interesting to explore whether this relates to the school ethos.

The AIE interview provided an opportunity for the pupils to reflect on and exercise ICC. Most of the pupils demonstrated a number of competences across the interview which indicates it was an age appropriate tool and helpful for the pupils. It was also helpful in that it helped identify outliers, which enabled a further investigation into possible factors that might have contributed to either higher or lower levels of competences being exhibited. All the pupils demonstrated comments that indicated Empathy, verbal Communicative Awareness and the skills of Explaining and Relating their findings to their experiences.

## **6.4 Second Action Research Intervention – The Story of Creation**

### **6.4.1 2AR1: Second Intervention, St Village School**

The second Intervention at AR1 took place on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016, six months after the first. The RE specialist had been keen to disseminate the work across the whole school and so an extended team of nine faith representatives presented the Story Tent Intervention across KS2. It was important to me that we maintained the continuity of research so a team of six worked with the class to present the material in the same way it had been presented in October. The same 26 pupils participated, no changes in class membership had happened over the six months.

Since it was not possible for our Jewish faith representative to take part in this round of Interventions I took the opportunity to expand the work to include members of the Sikh faith tradition. Discussions with representatives from the CIP indicated that this was something being developed within the adult academic programme and would be an

appropriate and potentially interesting dimension to explore. The story of creation was selected for comparison across the three faith traditions.

The Y6 pupils were reminded of the ICC underlying the programme with which they were now familiar. A further refinement of the assessment sheet was introduced, combining the two competences previously described as Interpret into a single competence labelled “understand another person”. This modified assessment sheet was presented to the pupils at the start of the day and they were encouraged use the whole range of the scale to reflect on their learning experience. This was a change made in response to previous team observations.

#### **6.4.2 2AR2: Second Intervention, Smalltown Community School**

The second Intervention at Smalltown Community School took place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016, six months after the first. It was planned that a team of six would work with the Y5 class. Since the first Intervention this class had lost one pupil and gained a new pupil. Unfortunately, the Sikh faith representative who had planned to attend was unable to attend and I had to step in to present the creation story from the Guru Granth Sahib, although this was not ideal. This demonstrated one of the challenges faced in practical classroom research – the difficulty of maintaining continuity across the different deliveries of the Story Tent Intervention.

#### **6.4.3 2AR3: Second Intervention, Middlecity Academy**

The second Intervention at Middlecity Academy took place on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016, six months after the first. A team of six worked with the Y5 class of 30 pupils (there had been no changes in the class over the 6-month period). During this Intervention we added a new member of the team who acted as an outside observer. Her task was to watch and make notes of observed examples of ICC throughout the morning. These observations were then typed up and grouped under the five headings of Respect,

Openness, Curiosity, Discovery and Understanding to match the pupils' self-assessment sheets and allow a comparison to be made.

#### 6.4.4 Data Analysis from Self-Assessment - Intervention 2

The data collected in the three schools provided information from the 86 pupils who took part and provides an overview of how the Intervention was received.

2nd AR (2AR)	School 1 St Village (2AR1)			School 2 Smalltown (2AR2)			School 3 Middlecity (2AR3)		
Session	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Curiosity	5.3	7.3	7.0	6.8	7.9	8.5	7.1	7.8	7.8
Respect	8.1	8.6	8.4	7.9	8.6	8.7	8.3	9.0	8.6
Open	7.8	8.1	8.2	7.5	8.0	8.6	8.2	8.4	7.9
Discovery	5.7	7.6	7.4	6.4	7.8	8.4	7.7	7.7	8.1
Understand	7.2	8.1	8.0	6.2	8.0	8.9	8.2	8.5	8.6

Table 13 – Self-assessment summary from 2AR

The pupils at St Village School responded well to the new five-part assessment metric and differentiated the use of the new scale more effectively. This made observed comparisons more accessible. The data suggests that during the Creation Intervention pupil competences increased across the day in all five areas assessed. The drama session had the highest scores in Respect, Curiosity, Discovery and Understanding. This reflected repeated comments throughout the day suggesting the drama had been an effective method to help pupils to embed the learning. There was a marked increase over the day in pupil Curiosity and Discovery. Openness gradually increased over the day with pupils appearing to be more open at the end than they were at the beginning of the day.

The pupils at Smalltown Community School made much better use of the assessment tool than on the previous iteration, which indicated that pupils were becoming more discerning in the self-reflective process. During the day there was an increase in the scores for skills and attitudes demonstrated across all of the five the competences. There



was a marked increase over the day in pupil Curiosity and Discovery. There were increases in pupils' Respect and Openness as the day developed but more significant increases in Curiosity (6.8 to 8.5), Discovery (6.4 to 8.4) and Understanding (6.2 to 8.9). This suggests that, for the pupils who took part in this iteration, there was a cumulative effect which enabled pupils to build upon each activity.

The pupils at Middlecity Academy demonstrated some change in their responses to the new self-assessment but this was not as marked as in Smalltown Community School. There were small increases in scores for Curiosity and Respect with Openness decreasing slightly over the day. This was noticed in the previous iteration in Middlecity Academy. The data from the self-assessment sheets suggested there were smaller changes in ICC over the course of the day than in the previous two schools but is still consistently high across the different competences. Respect was highest during the drama session, with Openness slightly decreasing over the day. Curiosity, Discovery and Understanding increased over the course of the day.

#### 6.4.5 Data Analysis from Group Findings - Intervention 2

The table below contains the information that came out of the analysis of the transcript of the afternoon session. The aim of this analysis was to explore which ICC were being exercised in the process of sorting texts through group dialogue.

2nd AR (2AR)	Attitudes			Relational			Communicat'n			Discovery			Skills			CCA	Total	
	AR	AO	AC	Id	Em	TA	CV	CN	CT	DT		DP	DE	SE	SR			SI
										+	-							
School 1 (2AR1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	8	3		0	0	3	5	1	0	29
School 2 (2AR2)	0	0	4	0	0	0	12	2	26	5	1	0	0	15	20	1	0	84
School 3 (2AR3)	0	0	3	1	0	0	8	4	14	3		0	0	8	8	0	0	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>162</b>

Table 14 - 2AR Coding data from group 3 session transcripts

The group discussion that took place at St Village School was a short session and not ideally positioned as there was demand on space during the whole school Story Tent day. This I believe is reflected in the limited number of competences recorded in relation to the other two schools. It is a reminder that there are many factors involved in data collection and highlights the importance of finding triangulated evidence across different data sources to create a fuller picture. The competences that were demonstrated in this group discussion indicated Communicative Awareness and cognitive skills.

A more detailed examination of the transcript revealed that pupils valued the physical process of acting out the story, which had helped them remember key information. During the small group session pupils commented on the process of reading, acting and watching the drama as a source of recall. Pupils made comments such as “I acted it”, “I heard it”, “I read it” or “I said it” to describe their reasons for putting texts within a faith tradition. Key words were also important, and this iteration produced interesting comments on phrases and patterns in the texts. For example: “millions and millions” is used on several occasions in the Guru Granth Sahib text as was “There was evening and there was morning” in the Bible. The pupils picked up on these patterns along with key words such as “fruitful”, “multiply” and “Indeed” which helped them Explain their reasons for placing texts within a faith tradition. They also used the different names of God to help them to distinguish the different faith traditions.

The ICC findings from group discussion that took place at Smalltown Community School were similar to the findings from their first experience of the Story Tent day. The pupils exercised Communicative Awareness with almost twice as many comments referring to the text as the verbal exchanges. They also demonstrated an ability to Explain and Relate their findings to their experiences and it was noticeable that their

Curiosity had increased. These pupils again scored significantly higher number of competences in this style of learning than either of the other two schools.

A more detailed examination of the transcript revealed that pupils Related the three stories to each other and noticed similarities and differences. For some they remembered the information through hearing it or acting it out whilst others looked for punctuation clues in the words themselves. A couple of times pupils were able to recognise different concepts used in different stories; for example, the use of clay to create humans was in the Quran whilst in the Bible it refers to “dust”; and the use of “heavens” was used in the Bible whilst Sikhs use the word “sky”. Pupils also noticed patterns in the texts for example the use of “evening and morning”, “fruitful” and “multiply” were repeated in the Bible. One pupil observed that the Bible used pairs of things together.

The group discussion that took place at Middlecity Academy during the second iteration registered more comments indicating Curiosity. It was again Communicative Awareness and cognitive skills that were most often demonstrated and, whilst similar scores were recorded in Communicative Awareness, there were fewer comments indicating cognitive skills.

A more detailed examination of the transcript revealed that that pupils understood key religious words and poetic patterns found in the text. Their comments demonstrated Curiosity, they were confident relating the stories to each other by making comparisons and Explaining the thinking behind them. The drama helped pupils to remember phrases which they had either read, seen or acted out themselves. They also recognised the different names for God to help sort the texts. During this session one pupil was confident drawing from her own understanding of faith to discuss the nature of God and Explain her reasonings from her own faith perspective.

## 6.4.6 Data Analysis from Adult Observations - Intervention 2

The table below contains the findings from the transcripts of the research team observation at the end of each session. Whilst every effort was taken to get together to discuss each session, this was not possible at St Village School or Middlecity Academy as the teacher was on playground duty. As a result, we delayed the final interview to incorporate the final two sessions together.

2nd AR (2AR)	Attitudes						Relational			Communicat'n			Discovery			Skills			CCA	Total
	AR		AO		AC		Id	Em	TA	CV	CN	CT	DT	DP	DE	SE	SR	SI		
	+	-	+	-	+	-														
<b>School 1 (2AR1)</b>																				
1	4		3		11		0	0	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	24
2	8		4		13		1	0	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	11	1	4	50
3 & 4	4		4		7 2		2	0	2	5	6	10	7	1	5	0	9	0	1	61
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>11</b>		<b>29</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>School 2 (2AR2)</b>																				
1	0	2	0		6 1		0	0	0	7	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	3	0	25
2	2		1		5		3	0	1	10	2	0	0	0	0	1	8	2	0	35
3	0		0		2		1	1	0	6	4	2	0	0	0	1	6	1	0	24
4	1		0		0 3		2	0	0	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>School 3 (2AR3)</b>																				
1	1		3		15		3	0	1	6	0	6	2	0	2	0	11	3	0	53
2	12	3	6		16		4	0	2	15	1	5	1	1	1	2	16	0	0	79
3 & 4	0	1	0		14 1		4	0	1	6	0	6	4	1	0	2	11	0	0	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>44</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>179</b>

Table 15 - 2AR Coding data from adult observation transcripts

During this iteration at St Village School, the pupils used greater differentiation in their responses and were more thoughtful in completing their self-assessments. This was clearly noted during the team reflections at the end of the first session.

The adults' comments demonstrated an awareness of positive attitudes across the day with particularly high levels of Curiosity. The questions the pupils were asking Related not only to the story but also at a deeper level to the meaning of faith as experienced by the faith representatives. For example:

*I think they definitely showed a lot of curiosity. In the group that we were working in they asked loads of questions, not just about the creation story but a young girl asked me about evolution, she asked me as well whether I believed in evolution and I think that is quite mature of her to be asking different religions about one concept across different religions. (SFR1)*

Once again, the drama session was well received, and it was through these encounters that significant exchange of learning took place. One of the pupils had insights about the Sikh creation story that had not previously been seen by the researcher. The research team commented on how they had been learning from their fellow team members, and adults noticed that pupils in their groups were sharing with each other and helping to answer questions.

There was a greater awareness during this Intervention of the different expressions of faith worked out in different geographical locations demonstrating Critical Cultural Awareness. Having a larger team of faith representatives working across the whole school enabled the exploration of internal diversity within faith traditions. For example:

*Yeah and they were interested in religion that transcends cultures so Christianity in California and Christianity in Spain, what does that look like? (MFR1)*

The comments from the third session suggested pupils were using the texts well and relating them to each other during the sorting activities. The final whole school Q&A session was particularly well received, with the highest number of ICC comments recorded (61) across the day's activities. The pupils asked deep and thought-provoking questions and I wish that I had recorded this session to be able to demonstrate the quality of the questioning. The following comments from the adult observations is an indicator of the sorts of encounters that took place.

*I think some of the last questions we were asked were really telling and really insightful. "What was God doing before he created the world" and "Why did he decide to create the world." They are typical questions, but I think they were quite insightful. (CFR3)*

By the end of the day one of the faith representatives recognised that the adults were modelling the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity through the way they engaged with other members of the team. The questions the children asked were very deep and searching and not always easy to answer. This provided a practical opportunity for the Faith Representatives to observe that they could not answer some questions, an important lesson from the day.

*They are opportunities to show that religion doesn't have all the answers. ... but actually, all the religions help us to deal with ambiguity in the world, to deal with not knowing in the world. To provide us with some comfort, and so I think it is good for us to say as role models, actually that's a question I ask. Actually, I'm not sure about the answer. (SFR1)*

The team were able to receive fresh insights into possible alternative interpretations to stories with which they felt familiar. Through the activities, pupils were demonstrating the ability to use the texts and Relate the stories to each other as well as to past personal experiences.

For Smalltown School the start of this Intervention required last minute changes to the delivery due to the lack of a Sikh representative. Despite these changes, the pupils responded well and engaged fully in the activities prepared.

During this Intervention, the team observed that pupils were particularly respectful towards their fellow classmates:

*Yes, they did not just absorb their own story; they had really listened and watched what the others were doing. (ST2)*

In the process of delivering the Sikh story of creation, with which I was previously unfamiliar, I was surprised to realise that I was learning from the pupils as they engaged with the text. There was more evidence during this Intervention of pupils' ability to Interpret their findings.

*I thought yeah, so it's like suddenly they caught something that I hadn't seen and I'm going with that because it feels that they have actually interpreted what they were reading and applying it to what they already know. (RS)*

One of the research team highlighted a potential limitation in the use of the self-reflection assessment sheet. She raised the question of whether pupils had the ability to reliably understand their attitudes and whether these might be confused with emotions. One child had given himself a 10 for Respect at the start of the day and had after the second session rated himself as 5 or a 6. When questioned about it he said that after play time he was not feeling as happy: he did not appear to be able to separate feelings of respect and happiness. This raised the question about the importance of talking with the pupils as they think through their responses.

*I think perhaps sometimes they don't understand their own emotions, do they? Am I feeling less respectful or am I just tired maybe because I've had a hard morning. It's difficult for some of them I think isn't it. (ST2)*

The team observed that the drama session had a positive impact on how the pupils had responded and that the delivery of the Intervention had not been negatively affected by the lack of a Sikh faith representative. The research team also noticed an increase in pupils' willingness to Tolerate Ambiguity:

*MFR2: ...some of them wrote you don't have to believe in what other people believe.*

In Middlecity Academy there was a significant increase in the attitudes demonstrated during this Intervention. Pupils' Curiosity was high throughout the day and they were particularly Respectful during the second session. It was observed that during the first session as MFR2 was talking about the Quran that there was an almost tangible atmosphere of Curiosity and Respect. It is very difficult to measure or explain. The school has a significant proportion of Muslim pupils and I think that in the aftermath of the Trojan horse enquiry there had been a sensitivity within the community and an unwillingness to engage openly with discussions about Islam in schools. Providing a safe space for the pupils to ask questions and explore faith openly enabled the Muslim pupils in particular with a unique opportunity to ask questions.

*I was very struck when you were actually introducing and talking about the Quran there was a real quiet, there was a real respect for you. Just seeing them in the tent hearing someone talking about their sacred text, I felt that was very tangible. (RS)*

and

*It's interesting, I thought the questions they had for you were very much like trying to confirm, like you are the expert, OK I've heard this this and this, which one is really true? You know and like with P13 she said, "I asked this of my teacher and she said the answer is different for different people", so she was really wanting to clarify things. I thought that was really interesting. (CFR2)*

Middlecity Academy stood out in both iterations of the Story Tent Intervention as a school where pupils demonstrated more comments that indicated competence in communicating across religious and cultural encounters, particularly in Relating and Interpreting the stories. Pupils Related the creation story to both the science work they had been studying in class and to what they knew about religion from their own faith tradition.



*Yes, they were very curious they had just been learning about planets and solar systems and it mentions that in the creation story, so they were asking like, what happens when the sun ends?*  
(SFR1)

During this Intervention to the research team again commented on new insights they had gained through the eyes of pupils from another faith position. Working on the text from the Bible one pupil noticed that the creation story was constructed of a series of opposites: light and dark, day and night, male and female, and so forth. Another had an interesting Interpretation of the concept of being fruitful.

*...one of the boys said God created opposites. No-one else has brought that up before, so he was saying on this day he created light and dark.* (CFR2)

and

*One of the things I really liked was when you said what does that mean be fruitful and multiply and one of the girls said, "Well you know fruit is sweet and so be probably means that you should be sweet to each other."* (CFR2)

Each of these observations had been made by pupils who were outside the faith tradition under review and yet their observations had helped the faith representative to gain new insights and understanding of the texts.

Throughout the day the research team commented on how pupils' personal faith position had impacted their responses and how pupils had wanted to explore and deepen their own understanding of faith through the questions they asked. The pupils at this school appeared confident talking about insights they had gained from home and wanted to discuss and explore this further within the wider school setting to clarify their understanding.

*I think in my group again in the second half it was more about the reality of their belief. They keep coming to that and it's basically because they hear a lot of stories at home, so they kept saying my Mum told me this and I've learned this at home. (MFR2)*

This was particularly noticeable when pupils were asked to act out part of the Quran story. Having a Muslim faith representative explaining and connecting a personal faith experience from outside of the school with the learning taking place in the classroom was not only reassuring for the pupils but helped expand their learning.

*And even in the play like when I said prostrate I didn't relate the word but when I explained it they instantly used the Arabic word for it prostration because they use it in their daily prayers. And then one of them said that you know, and then when I said they had to act it out and they said no we are not allowed to prostrate, and I said I know that, but we can just act it you don't have to go all the way down. (MFR2)*

The experiences from this school have provided a reminder of the importance of recognising pupils' personal beliefs and values and respecting community faith traditions.

The comments from the outside observer demonstrated a few examples of Openness and Respect. There were many examples of Curiosity and Discovery and some of growing understanding of another perspective: these findings were reflected in the pupils' self-assessments and the adults' comments.

During this second iteration of the Story Tent the adults observed many examples of positive attitudes with Curiosity being high across the day, particularly at St Village School and Middlecity Academy. Pupils were good at verbal communication across the day and were able to Relate their findings to their experiences. The negative comments which came out of the interviews were often linked to behavioural issues related to the delivery of the activities and reflects the need to develop some guidelines for the faith representatives to use in their role as facilitators of group sessions.

### 6.4.7 Data Analysis from AIE Interview - Intervention 2

The table below contains the findings from pupils' AIE interviews. One of the pupils who had taken part in the first Intervention was away on the day and so another pupil (Tom) was selected to join group discussion and following AIE interview. Luke was not available to participate in the morning session due to a local swimming gala, which is reflected in his low score in relation to his response to the first Intervention. This is a reminder of the complexity of practical research in classroom settings. These findings are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7, but the data is displayed, and the context briefly described in this Chapter.

2nd AR (2AR)	Attitudes						Relational			Communicat'n			Discovery			Skills			CCA	Total		
	AR		AO		AC		Id	Em	TA	CV	CN	CT	DT		DP	DE	SE	SR			SI	
	+	-	+	-	+	-							+	-								
<b>School 1 (2AR1)</b>																						
Alice	0	1	2	3	2	3	3	2	0	5	0	0	5	3	0	0	5	3	0	0	29	
Paul	0	2	4	1	2	0	4	1	1	6	0	0	4	4	0	0	4	4	0	0	29	
Luke	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	7	0	1	0	7	0	1	0	19	
George	1	0	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	8	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	21	
Lucy	2	10	5	8	6	3	10	3	5	9	7	1	6	9	2	1	6	9	2	1	87	
<b>School 2 (2AR2)</b>																						
Harvey	1	0	1	5	2	0	2	1	4	6	2	1	0	3	7	0	0	3	7	0	0	31
Mark	3	1	2	2	3	2	4	1	1	5	0	0	3	5	0	0	3	5	0	0	32	
Joy	1	2	1	3	3	4	1	0	0	4	2	0	5	6	0	1	5	6	0	1	33	
Ruby	0	1	1	3	2	0	1	1	1	4	0	0	3	3	0	0	3	3	0	0	20	
Helen	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	0	
Tom	0	2	0	3	3	1	5	0	0	5	1	0	4	5	0	1	4	5	0	1	30	
<b>School 3 (2AR3)</b>																						
Aamir	0	0	4	1	3	2	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	7
Zainab	5	3	1	3	1	3	2	0	2	3	1	3	3	4	0	1	3	4	0	1	35	
Sumera	1	3	3	4	2	1	6	0	6	5	1	0	3	7	0	0	3	7	0	0	42	
Susan	1	2	2	5	4	0	5	0	0	6	2	0	4	7	1	0	4	7	1	0	39	
Shazad	1	1	5	3	0	1	2	0	1	3	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	22	
Jamila	0	1	1	3	1	0	1	0	5	6	0	0	2	3	1	0	2	3	1	0	24	

Table 16 - 2AR Coding data from AIE transcripts

Five pupils took part in the AIE interviews at St Village School. The transcribed data indicated that Curiosity was high across all pupils. The comments they made indicated genuine interest and excitement about the work they had been doing. Pupils exercised

verbal Communicative Awareness through their comments about the way talking had impacted their encounters. The pupils indicated many Discoveries that they had made, and these were accurate without any misunderstandings. All the pupils were able to Explain their encounters and all except one were able to Relate their findings to past experiences. One of the pupils interviewed demonstrated outstanding levels of competences and Lucy will be looked at in more detail in the data analysis.

All the five pupils interviewed at Smalltown Community School commented on their Identity in the statements they used to describe their experiences. Three of the five demonstrated the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity and it was these children who appeared to make more Discoveries and were able to Explain and Relate their findings. One of the five interviewed was not able to make accurate Discoveries and his comments indicated some basic religious literacy errors.

Six pupils were interviewed at Middlecity Academy the day after the Intervention. All those interviewed expressed Curiosity and Identity markers and all of them made comments about their Discoveries. During this second Intervention the pupils demonstrated more evidence of using the text as well as verbal cues, a change from the first Intervention when they depended more on verbal Communicative Awareness.

The data from these interviews indicates there may be a slight increase in Curiosity across the schools and an increase in the levels of reliable Discoveries being made. There are slightly more comments indicating Critical Cultural Awareness in this second Intervention and those pupils who did tended to demonstrate higher number of comments about Identity markers and Tolerating Ambiguity.

#### **6.4.8 Trends and Questions Coming out of the Data**

During these iterations the pupils demonstrated depth of Curiosity through the questions they asked. The questions were not just about the stories themselves but had become the vehicles for pupils to ask more about the reality of living faith. The adults recognised that the Intervention was providing a space to learn together as a community of enquirers and the last session provided an opportunity for the faith representatives to model how to tolerate ambiguity. This may be something to develop further through future Story Tent Interventions.

I was initially concerned that not having a Sikh representative would impact the responses of the pupils, however the respect the pupils had for each other and the enthusiasm for the drama helped them to develop the Communicative Awareness to Explain and Relate their experiences to the stories. Whilst there were still examples of pupils making mistakes in the Discoveries this did not stop them making connections and finding similarities and differences in the stories. They were beginning to demonstrate the ability to accommodate different opinions alongside each other whilst maintaining their own beliefs. They were able to engage with the texts and find patterns to help them Relate their understanding to personal experiences of the world.

Pupils at Middlecity Academy demonstrated more examples of ICC on both occasions. During the first iteration they tended to use verbal communication to Explain and Relate but the second time they were using the text with more confidence. They had greater Curiosity the second time around and this not only impacted the number of discoveries they were making but they also appeared to be learning about the process of Discovering from people of other faiths. They were very good at Explaining and Relating their findings and Interpreting faith through the experiences they had at school and within

their own faith tradition. In this school with a large Muslim community the impact of personal faith appeared to have a greater importance in the discussions

## **6.5 Summary of Findings**

Throughout the different Interventions as described above there does appear to be evidence that that pupils were demonstrating ICC through the process of the Story Tent Intervention as outlined by the Council of Europe. The drama appears to be a particularly helpful vehicle that enabled pupils to demonstrate Respect, Empathy and Curiosity and to engage with the written text in meaningful ways, whilst the process of working collaboratively together demonstrated pupils' attitudes of Respect and Openness towards each other. The group discussion demonstrated pupils' Communicative Awareness both through verbal discussion and text-based communication. Pupils Explained and Related their experiences and demonstrated examples of Interpretation as outlined in Byram's model. The self-assessment sheet helped pupils to develop the skill of reflexivity and provided useful data on how the pupils were responding to the Intervention. Finally, the AIE provided rich insights into how the pupils had experienced the Intervention. These proved extremely helpful in processing pupils' thinking and will be explored in more detail in the next Chapter. This next section outlines some themes that have come out of the research findings so far and these will also be explored further in the next Chapter.

### **6.5.1 Are some Intercultural Communicative Competence Linked?**

It appears that some of the ICC may be linked. For example, pupils who exhibit the most Curiosity appear to make significant Technical Discoveries, whilst those who demonstrate negative Curiosity make fewer and at times inaccurate Discoveries. Pupils who are Communicatively Aware appear to be able to Explain and Relate their findings. Interestingly during the first Intervention at Middlecity Academy verbal Communicative

Awareness was the only awareness being used to process the events of the day and yet this did not impact their ability to Relate and Interpret their findings. There were very few examples of Critical Cultural Awareness; it would be interesting to explore which competences enabled them to demonstrate this competence. Could it be that Empathy and emancipatory Discoveries are linked to Critical Cultural Awareness?

### **6.5.2 What Part Does Personal Faith Have in ICC?**

During the AIE most pupils expressed some personal faith position: five self-identified as Christian, six as Muslim, three as believers in science and evolution, whilst three did not make any reference to their own faith position. Looking at the results from the data it appears that having a faith position may impact ICC, or perhaps there is a natural link between self-awareness of a faith position and Interreligious Competence. For some their faith position helped them to Interpret another point of view whilst for others it seemed to get in the way and inhibit their responses.

### **6.5.3 What Impact Does the School Ethos Have on ICC?**

The different responses from the pupils at the research schools may suggest that the religious and cultural ethos of the school could have an impact on the ability of pupils to engage with intercultural encounters and subsequent development of competences. The pupils in the two schools with a religious ethos (St Village Church of England and Middlecity Academy) appeared to be more proficient at demonstrating ICC. However, pupils from the non-religious community school (Smalltown School) did appear to develop an understanding over the two iterations, more so than in the other two schools. The multicultural city school scored highly on all areas of competences during both iterations.

#### **6.5.4 What Effect Does the Ability to Tolerate Ambiguity Have on ICC?**

One aspect that does appear to have a significant impact on a pupil's ability to demonstrate the higher order skills of Relating, Interpreting and Critical Cultural Awareness is their ability to Tolerate Ambiguity. Those children who expressed a faith position and were able to Tolerate Ambiguity demonstrated much deeper learning than those who wanted quick resolutions in their learning processes. This might indicate that developing the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity is a target aspiration in achieving ICC.



## **7 FINDINGS FROM THE AIE INTERVIEWS**

In Chapter 7 I will provide an overview of each ICC coded for in the data analysis process, these codes can be found in Appendix H. I will look in more depth at the responses of the pupils during the AIE interviews and explore patterns emerging in the light of findings collected during the Intervention day. I will also begin to make links with the literature review and explore possible theoretical insights that have arisen during the research.

### **7.1 Introduction**

Throughout the school-based work I wanted to explore how SR practices might be used to facilitate opportunities which would enable pupils to exercise ICC. To do this, two questions were consistently applied and explored in the following discussion:

- 1 - Which ICC (if any) were being exercised during the Story Tent Intervention?
- 2 - How does the Story Tent Intervention encourage (enable) pupils to exercise ICC?

A copy of the AIE interview template and the interview coding criteria can be found in Appendix E and H respectively. Whilst Chapter 6 aimed to provide a broad overview of the pupils' response to the Intervention, this Chapter seeks to explore a more detailed consideration of the pupils' thoughts and insights surrounding the intercultural encounter.

### **7.2 Attitudes - Valuing Others**

In Byram's model of ICC two categories of attitudes are promoted. This first section aims to explore the responses which demonstrate Respect for others as manifested through Openness and Curiosity. I have reviewed these three attitudes separately and

have drawn on data collected from the pupils' AIE transcripts, adult observations and pupil self-assessment observations.

### **7.2.1 Attitude of Respect (AR)**

In all three of the participating schools' respectful dialogue was observed. While it was not always explicitly stated within the AIE interview responses there were many comments made indicating respectful listening had been taking place. Comments such as:

*I have learned that we should listen to other people and share their stories and think about what differences and similarities they have and respect other people when they are telling the stories.*

*(Jamila)*

The pupils' self-assessments indicated high levels of Respect across all the Interventions, the highest levels of respect being demonstrated during the second session. Comments from the team observations also indicated that respectful attitudes were being demonstrated.

*I think they were thoroughly respectful for the whole time. I think the Quran one is the hardest one because it has got the biggest chunk in there for them to absorb, they showed utter respect through the whole process that was evident I think throughout. (ST1)*

This Respect was consistent with each of the school's ethos as described in their prospectuses and was a central part of the experience described by those who participated in the Intervention.

### **7.2.2 Attitude of Openness (AO)**

The responses from the AIE interviews indicated that almost all the pupils demonstrated enjoyment and an openness to learn more about other world viewpoints. For example:

*I have learnt it is a really good religion. That maybe I want to have friends in it.*

*(Susan)*

The adult comments and the self-assessment responses also indicate this positive Openness for most of the pupils. Most pupils' Openness went up or stayed the same over the course of the day. However, for a few of the pupils their Openness went down. During the first Intervention Ruby, Joy and Aamir all self-assessed as less Open at the end of the day than at the start. Brewer suggests that there is a fluid tension at work during intercultural encounters and that this tension is helpful to the learning process. On the one hand pupils are looking to belong, for assimilation and inclusion within the group. However, there is also a need for differentiation, to maintain an individual personal identity that is in opposition to the desire for immersion. These findings could indicate that part of the process of developing ICC is embedded in this anomalous finding that through the process of intercultural dialogue there is a fluid attitude of Openness being worked out through the tension as outlined by Brewer. It could be that a reduction of Openness demonstrated in the interviews and reflected in the self-assessments could be part of the process of developing an understanding of the "other".

During the second Intervention Ruby and Joy both indicated in their self-assessment an increase in Openness over the course of the day however Aamir retained the same rating of Openness (6) throughout the day. During his second AIE interview Aamir was reluctant to take part; he repeatedly replied, "I can't think of anything" indicating a lack of Openness. His responses in the group transcript however indicate an Openness to participate in dialogue alongside his peers so it may be that he felt uncomfortable with the interview setting or working one to one with an adult. These findings suggest that whilst it is possible to try to provide an open environment in which pupils can express opinions without judgement, pupils may still choose to opt out and this should be respected.

The influence of family and the wider community on pupils' Openness was again noticeable in the AIE interviews, particularly in Middlecity Academy. Zainab identified herself as a practising Muslim pupil, she was aware of the attitudes from her own faith community and yet she was Open and willing to challenge them. She demonstrated not only a desire to Tolerate Ambiguity but also the ability to describe and Explain her thinking.

*My Mosque said don't listen to other religions. And I said how come it's in school and they said well it's OK for school, but I felt like I'm their religion because I was listening to it. I felt like yeah that is the true story for example, I felt like the right to be and I felt the right to listen to a different kind of story but in a different kind of way. (Zainab)*

The Openness indicated in the AIE interviews and the pupil self-assessments highlighted that the Story Tent Intervention had provided opportunities for pupils to engage with difference in a positive way. Whilst most of the pupils were able to remain Open to examine new ideas, for some pupils it proved to be challenging. The data emerging from the AIE interviews indicated that personal religious identity had an impact on the pupils' Openness to the Story Tent Intervention. For some their religious identity provided a framework for them to explore their viewpoints. However, for those who were not Open their preconceptions became a barrier to engagement.

The explicitly religious nature of the day and the way the team talked about their faith positions presented opportunities for pupils to talk about their own beliefs. This was evident in the comments from the adults who frequently reported the depth of questions the pupils were asking; it was evident in the transcripts of the group work and in the AIE interviews. where pupils were drawing from their own faith tradition as well as the experiences of the day.

My own personal experience of teaching RE in primary schools, my observation of others teaching RE and my use of RE curriculum resources have often assumed that pupils hold a neutral position when dealing with matters of faith. Lessons have been constructed around clear objectives based on the two-fold nature of learning about religion and learning from religion. Where a pupil's faith became evident through reflections at the end of lessons the general expectation was that they would bracket out their own faith position to see another perspective. The way the pupils interacted with the Story Tent Intervention was different to many of the RE lessons I have experienced; it enabled pupils to bring out the knowledge and experiences they had as members of faith communities themselves.

In preparing for the research the groupings were allocated by the teacher based on those pupils who would work well together. I applied no criteria linked to either ability or religious faith affiliation. Therefore, during the Interventions some pupils were working as insiders on stories from their own faith tradition whilst others operated outside their own faith tradition. This had an impact on how the pupils felt about the Intervention. For some the opportunity to work within their own faith tradition was comfortable and positive, yet for others it was a missed opportunity to learn about other perspectives. For some pupils working outside personal faith traditions was uncomfortable, whilst others preferred this dimension and enjoyed exploring new and interesting comparisons.

Lucy described herself as a Christian and enjoyed taking part in the Intervention from an intra-faith position as well as an interfaith position:

*Because like last time you came I looked at Christianity which I looked deeper into my faith, this time I was with SFR1, so it was like really unique to talk to someone who talked about a belief that was different to mine. (Lucy)*

Lucy was highly motivated and confident in her own faith identity which may have helped her to experience positively both styles of Intervention.

Ruby identified herself as a Christian who read the Bible. During the AIE interview she repeatedly referred to insights from a Christian faith perspective rather than the Quranic story she had been allocated. This tendency was also evident in the group discussion when she regularly contributed information about the Bible rather than what she had learned from her experience of the Muslim story.

*Well the story teller believes that well that her story is really sacred, but I believe more in the Bible story. (Ruby)*

During both Interventions her comments drew from her own faith understanding and she was less Open to talking about other perspectives.

Shazad was initially a little nervous during his AIE interview. Although he was quiet in group activities he was confident Explaining the Muslim story of creation and during the AIE he was able to Explain in detail the story he had been studying. His Openness carried over during his encounter with the Bible story in the second iteration. He was confident in his own faith position and able to explore another position.

*Because, I read the Quran and when I'm reading from something else I feel interested how I can see what the difference is. (Shazad)*

During the second Intervention I was fortunate to be able to work with Shazad. I was particularly impressed with the way he was able to shed new light on the creation story from an outsider's perspective. He observed that at the end of each day the creation was described in terms of opposites; for example, light and dark, day and night, land and water, earth and sea. It was a series of divisions into opposites. I had never noticed this before and found it fascinating to see how the perspective from a Muslim pupil was able

to Interpret and bring new insight into a very familiar Christian story. This demonstrates one of the principles of SR which upholds the idea that it is in sharing our insights we not only learn more about another perspective but also come to a fuller understanding of our own tradition. Those who approach a text with a fresh insight can often cast new hermeneutical interpretations on previously familiar stories. They bring new and fresh insights from a different faith perspective.

Jamila identified herself as a Muslim and told me that she had read through the whole of the Quran once already. Working within her own faith tradition she commented on the fact that she was learning new information but was also Open to finding out more about other faith perspectives.

*I have learnt that we should listen to other people and share their stories and think about what differences and similarities they have and respect other people when they are telling the stories and let people share their ideas about how they think the story could help you. (Jamila)*

During the second Intervention she demonstrated less evidence of ICC and her overall score of ICC over the course of the interview had dropped. This may have been due to the shorter interview or perhaps that she felt more Open to learning about others from within her own faith tradition, and that participating in the activities as an outsider was less comfortable.

These examples highlight different aspects of Openness demonstrated by pupils. Whilst there are many different responses to the Intervention it would be interesting to explore further how pupils' attitudes were impacted by their experience of working within their own faith positions or working as an outsider. It is clear from the responses discussed that respecting pupils' faith position and interests does have an impact on their attitudes; however, it may be that it is the very pupils who do not want to experience other faiths that may learn the most from them.

During the AIE interviews pupils commented on their feelings and beliefs and whilst for most of those who took part it was a very positive experience for some their responses indicated reservations. It may be appropriate to explore the possibility of assigning a space for those who feel uncomfortable to withdraw to and talk through what they are feeling. Religion is a deeply personal and integral part of identity and I may have put some pupils in a space with no option to opt out. I will be more aware of this in future iterations and will endeavour to be more explicit in the comments I make when setting up activities to indicate that it is acceptable to feel a little uncomfortable but also provide support for those pupils who find it challenging.

It would be interesting to explore further whether those pupils who demonstrated less Openness were operating in an intra or interfaith context. It would also be interesting to explore whether there is an impact on the development of ICC which is linked to the engagement of pupils as either insiders or outsiders of the faith position of the story.

The issue of internal diversity was demonstrated on two occasions when there were two adult participants from the same faith tradition taking part in the Intervention. In Smalltown Community two Muslims worked together and in St Village School Christian representatives from America and Spain provided an interesting contrast of different beliefs within the same faith tradition. On these occasions the team highlighted the value this had in presenting internal diversity of faith.

*Yeah and they were interested in religion that transcends cultures so Christianity in California and Christianity in Spain, what does that look like? (MFR1)*

And

*I thought it was very good having the two of you there, because you have the headscarf and you do not, and you wear it for prayer time, it was interesting for them to see that. (CFR2)*



These combinations created an opportunity for the pupils to explore the internal diversity of faith as outlined by Jackson and highlight the possibilities for using the same story tent experience for exploring intra-faith dialogue. Pupils are often encouraged to look for similarities and differences between different faith perspectives, but it is often harder to operate those same skills and attitudes when exploring differences within.

### **7.2.3 Attitude of Curiosity (AC)**

Attitudes of Curiosity were mentioned more frequently in the AIE interview than those of Respect or Openness. There were frequent examples of Curiosity across all aspects of the day and this was also reflected in the findings from the outside observer who took part in the final Intervention at Middlecity Academy. The attitude of Curiosity was demonstrated in all three schools and teachers highlighted that some of the pupils' attitudes exceeded teacher's expectations:

*It's like Pupil 17 all day has been contributing a lot. He is fairly good, but he is not one of the most vocal. It has really captured him I think. (ST2)*

One significant finding that came out of the first Intervention was the extent to which the pupils wanted to ask questions. The comments below are examples from each of the three schools showing pupil Curiosity.

*So, I didn't know what was happening, so I was a bit curious you know like you said yesterday. (Paul)*

*I thought it was very powerful and it made me feel very interested. (Mark)*

*I really wanted to know what happened at the end. (Sumera)*

Whilst most of the pupils expressed high levels of Curiosity there were two of the participants with comments which suggested negative levels of Curiosity.

Helen identified strongly with her own Christian faith tradition and many of her AIE comments focused on the differences between her own faith and the Muslim story which she had been working on.

*Yes, because it's different, because they're telling it differently. (Helen)*

During the group time she drew on her church experiences and preferred to remain within her own faith convictions rather than explore those of others. When asked whether she would like to know more about MFR2's religion she said "no" suggesting that she would prefer to maintain her faith position in isolation from other influences.

Aamir also had a negative comment about Curiosity. During his interview he was reluctant to talk about his experiences. When asked if he could remember anything from the day he simply said "no". It took a while for him to begin to share a few thoughts, but his responses were limited. He was particularly motivated by the drama and his positive responses in his self-assessment sheets indicated Curiosity during the Intervention day. His reluctance could have been due to the interview process. He was confident in his own faith position as a Muslim and Related what he was learning back to his own knowledge of the Quran. Like Helen he was referring back to his own faith tradition and keen to maintain his understanding of the Quran.

During the second Intervention he worked with the Guru Granth Sahib and again his responses were very reluctant. During the interview his repeated reply was "I can't think of anything else." His comment about the creation story "I heard about it in my religion," suggests a desire to identify more strongly with his own faith tradition and less Open to other interpretations. During the group discussion time he also drew on his own Muslim tradition to help sort the texts rather than operate as a representative of the Sikh faith on whose story he had been working. It would have been interesting to see

how he would have responded to working within his own faith tradition. His reluctance may have grown out of an uncertainty about exploring other faiths.

Those pupils who self-assessed an increase in Curiosity over the day also recorded an increase in Discovery. From a more detailed examination of the AIE interviews it appears there may be a link between Curiosity and number of Discoveries.

One recurring theme that came out of the research was the level of pupils' questioning, an attribute I used as an indicator of Curiosity. This was particularly noticeable in the second session where the style of presentation allowed pupils to engage through dialogue with the faith representatives. Having groups of 10 pupils with 2 adults to support the learning enabled a greater level of intimacy than is normally experienced in the classroom. During these times pupils were able to ask questions about the stories and what they meant but also questions of faith. The adults commented not only on Curiosity of the pupils but the insights and depth of questioning the pupils exhibited.

During the first iteration the research team repeatedly commented on the level of questioning that had come out of the day's activities. The type of questions the pupils were asking demonstrated a level of Curiosity and deep thinking that had not been anticipated. This level of critical questioning continued into the second iteration. God was not bracketed out and there was genuine desire to understand not only what the stories meant but also what it was like to practically live out faith.

*And then I feel that being able to relate to the experiences in everyday life is very powerful and a very good use of our presence in the classroom as well. They might not be able to approach someone on the street, but you know they can ask us those questions. (SFR1)*

This happened across all three schools and because of these observations we decided to extend the opportunity for questions at the end of the day to allow pupils an opportunity

to resolve any unanswered issues. We recognised that there are not many occasions when pupils had access to people from other faith traditions and given the opportunity to ask questions of a religious nature.

These final sessions were fascinating and opened opportunities to explore some difficult questions. SFR1 recognised that many of the questions the pupils were asking were similar to the sort of questions that as adults we might ask. She was willing to admit in front of the children that religion does not have all the answers and that it is acceptable to leave space for there to be uncertainty.

*Religion can be a way for you to come up with your own questions. It is another way for you to think because sometimes it can be this religion thinks this, this religion says that, but actually all the religions help us to deal with ambiguity in the world, to deal with not knowing in the world. To provide us with some comfort, and so I think it is good for us to say as role models, actually that's a question I ask. (SFR1)*

This willingness to model the toleration of ambiguity made the conversation very real and accessible to the participants. It also opened the possibility of further questions and identified that asking questions is a significant part of the learning process.

Comments from the adults and pupils indicated that a personal faith position had influenced the Openness and Curiosity they demonstrated during the encounter. Pupils who identified with a faith tradition talked about how this had impacted their response to the Intervention. For some pupils the Intervention was an enjoyable extension of their own faith position, whilst for others it had proven to be a limitation. The research model did not use personal faith as part of the criteria for group selection. Consequently, the research team were not always aware of pupils' faith position. It was not until the AIE interviews that some of the pupils felt able to identify themselves with a faith tradition and explore how this had impacted their responses.

### **7.3 Attitudes - Relativising Self**

Having reviewed the attitudes outlined in Byram's model which were linked to valuing others, this section considers the attitudes which reflect an ability to relativize self, those attitudes of Tolerating Ambiguity, Identity and Empathy. It draws primarily on data collected from the pupil's comments from the AIE and occasional adult observations made during the Intervention.

#### **7.3.1 Tolerating Ambiguity (TA)**

The findings from the AIE interviews from the first Intervention indicated there may be a link between the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity and the range of ICC demonstrated in the AIE interviews. Consequently, in this next section I have outlined a detailed account of the different types of responses each of the pupils made regarding this particular competence. The Council of Europe in the AIE describes this tolerance for ambiguity as "...the ability to accept ambiguity and lack of clarity and to be able to deal with it constructively". I was keen to explore how this was demonstrated in the AIE to more fully understand how this competence had been expressed. SR highlights that participants are not seeking consensus but exploring possible interpretations across faith boundaries. The ability to suspend judgement when understanding is unclear, if evident in the pupils' comments, might be an indicator that there is a link between ICC development and the effective application of SR principles.

The ability to Tolerate Ambiguity was demonstrated by 11 out of the 17 pupils interviewed over the two iterations and these comments were evident in all three schools and across different faith traditions. I have listed examples from each of the pupils who have exercised this competence in their AIE interview and listed these in school contexts.

At St Village School, four out of the five pupils interviewed demonstrated the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity. Lucy's approach demonstrated an empathetic response. She recognised SFR1 held different beliefs and yet she was able to suspend judgment and engage in the learning of the Sikh story of creation.

*I felt because she was so honest, and she felt so strongly about it then you couldn't say "no it's not true" because she was her faith. (Lucy)*

Alice also demonstrated that she recognised that she did not share a belief with her faith representative but was still able to maintain engagement with the Intervention.

*Yes, it felt like um 'cos it's like I don't really believe in that. (Alice)*

Paul on a simpler level was willing to explore the Noah story in the Quran not knowing what might happen. He was familiar with the Biblical story and willing to explore what similarities and differences there might be in the Quran.

*I've read it in the book of the Bible, but I had never seen it in the Quran before. Also, I didn't know what it was going to be like. (Paul)*

Luke commented on his reaction to investigating the Noah story in the Quran. He recognised significant differences in the story but also maintained engagement.

*Well it was very new, I wouldn't think what happened in there would actually happen, so it was very surprising. (Luke)*

These responses indicate a range of types of Tolerating Ambiguity, from the willingness to suspend judgement on personal beliefs to a willingness to accept different interpretations. George was the only pupil interviewed at 1AR1 who did not demonstrate comments to suggest he could Tolerate Ambiguity. This does not assume that he was not able but rather that he did not demonstrate it during the interview.

At Smalltown Community School three out of the six pupils interviewed demonstrated the ability to tolerate ambiguity. Mark talked about several Discoveries he had made and Related these to the other stories he had heard. He also demonstrated an awareness of the process of learning in intercultural contexts. Holding back ideas he felt familiar with in order to objectively review new ideas and make comparisons.

*I have heard another story before and that is different and so I have to try and move that out of the way so that I can listen and compare them to each other. (Mark)*

Joy was confident in her own faith position and religious identity and was able to accept other views even if she didn't believe them herself. She also demonstrated Empathy in her response in that she did not want to cause offence to those who believed differently.

*I think it's a bit different to what I would expect it to be because since I'm not like any like a Christian or something I didn't really believe in it but I thought this is important to hear so I should just listen and be careful what I say. (Joy)*

Tom held a strong personal belief position but was open to hear and learn from other perspectives. He recounted the Discoveries he had made from other faith positions in a respectful detached and clear way.

*I think I've learnt that not all stories are made with science and physics. And um... theirs even if it is different to mine, those are still individual because one of them just one word made the entire thing and they just had to wait seven days. (Tom)*

Ruby and Helen both described themselves as practising Christians but did not demonstrate the competence of Tolerating Ambiguity. They more frequently referred to their own faith position to clarify their own beliefs and Identity. Harvey was Respectful and interested in exploring other perspectives. He was able to look for similarities and differences and Related what he was finding out to what he already knew. His responses

however suggested he was checking information against each other rather than suspending judgement, holding tension and Tolerating Ambiguity.

*'cos I used to believe in one religion and only know one story and that was from the Bible, but now I know two from the Torah now. (Harvey)*

*Well, I've learnt that we are not all the same. (Harvey)*

At Middlecity Academy four of the six pupils interviewed demonstrated the ability to tolerate ambiguity. Zainab recognised that it was possible to listen to faith stories in different ways; to hold onto an understanding of your own interpretations but also be open to listen to a new interpretation through the process of critical engagement which was a different kind of encounter.

*I felt the right to listen to a different kind of story but in a different kind of way (Zainab)*

Sumera identified herself as a practising Muslim but demonstrated an understanding of the importance of being Open and Curious towards other stories from different faith traditions.

*I have learnt you have to be respectful, curious and open and that you have to listen to other people's stories even though it is not your religion. But you can still listen to it and be like, be curious. (Sumera)*

Jamila also described herself as a Muslim and proudly announced that she had read through the whole of the Quran in Arabic. She too was willing to approach faith stories with an open mind and allow different participants to form their own interpretations.

*I think it is really important to never force people to do that religion, I think you should let them decide but I think you should still tell them about it and let them decide in the end.*

*(Jamila)*



Shazad identified himself as a Muslim but recognised the importance of respectful dialogue which permits participants to other viewpoints and to disagree.

*I learnt two different stories of the Holy books and then there was... and there was respect and even though you disagree with them you just listen. (Shazad)*

Susan and Aamir did not demonstrate the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity in their interview.

For Ruby, Helen and Aamir faith appeared to be a barrier to understanding another perspective, focusing on differences rather than similarities. Their comments did not suggest a willingness to see another perspective. Whilst George and Susan didn't express the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity in their responses they were flexible and open to other perspectives in their responses to the Intervention.

These comments indicate that a significant number of pupils in all three schools had demonstrated a willingness to look for understanding of another viewpoint which allowed different interpretations rather than consensus. In this regard it would suggest that the Story Tent Intervention was providing a context where pupils could explore perspectives and engage with the "other" who was different, fulfilling the second principle outlined in SR.

### **7.3.2 Identity (Id)**

The AIE recognises the importance of the ability to take full notice of people's identities. During the analysis of the data, different Identity markers became evident. Pupils identified with faith positions such as "I'm a Christian", other comments referred to aspects of personality such as "I'm all shy", whilst others referred to geographical identity markers such as "He was from Africa." All the pupils made comments which indicated an awareness of religious and cultural identities in their AIE interviews. All of them were

able to recognise religious identity markers in those leading the Intervention. Some pupils also commented on their own religious positions, which became more noticeable in the AIE interviews.

Out of the 17 pupils who were interviewed, 14 of them identified with a faith position; 6 Muslims, 5 Christians and 3 who identified themselves as scientific rationalists. Three did not refer to any faith position during the interview. Within these faith positions there were different responses to the way pupils interpreted their faith. Having become aware of this I was keen to explore more fully the impact this had on the way they encountered the Story Tent Intervention.

SR grew out of interfaith dialogue firmly embedded within religious community. The Story Tent Intervention applied the principles in a secular school context and did not start from a position of personal faith, yet from the pupil responses personal identities were significant to the way pupils responded to the encounter. I wanted to investigate whether pupils' beliefs would impact the ability to engage with the encounter and communicate across difference.

To do this I chose to apply the "Loman Index of Biblical Interpretation" (Loman and Frances, 2006) to explore in more depth the styles of religious encounters demonstrated by the pupils and investigate the impact this had on their ICC. This coding process was applied after the Intervention as part of an extra analysis phase. Francis and Loman outlined three responses to biblical encounters: a literal acceptance, a symbolic acceptance or rejection as modes to the interpretation of scripture. This next section explores the comments from the pupils who align their religious identity with these different styles and begins to explore the impact these responses have had on their development of ICC.

The comments below reflect the “literal” responses reported in the interview. During the AIE interview pupils were asked to consider similarities and differences in the sacred texts they had studied and the books they read in school. This question elicited comments which indicated pupils’ perception on the truthlike nature of the texts and whether they were to be considered fiction or non-fiction. Alice and Aamir both demonstrated a literal interpretation of the texts studied.

*So, because this is like fact as well as a story it was like different. (Alice)*

*...because it is actually real life. (Aamir)*

Both pupils interpreted the texts from a literal perspective and yet there was a huge difference in the number of ICC demonstrated. Alice scored highly across all competences whilst Aamir demonstrated few.

George and Zainab also both demonstrated literal interpretations to the story of Noah but were open to consider other interpretations.

*I normally read like fantasy stories so, but this actually happened in real life, so it was different, and it was written a long time ago this story. (George)*

*So, which one would actually be true then? I don’t know, maybe it’s just what they believe. (George)*

Zainab believed that stories contained literal interpretations in comments she made during both iterations and yet she too was open to experiencing other possible interpretations.

*It felt kind of strange and it felt kind of important because you know it all could happen. I think that could be real. (Zainab)*

*God said a couple of different things in the creation and when he wanted it, it came true. (Zainab)*

Again, this did not appear to be a predictor of high or low ICC: Zainab scored highly in the first iteration across all competences whilst George demonstrated an average score.

The comments below reflect the “symbolic” responses reported in the interview. Susan was aware of the mystical nature of the texts indicating a symbolic style of interpretation. She showed great Empathy in her comments and was able to Relate her findings to the other faith stories studied during the day and her own personal experiences.

*It was really fun, and I liked the way the tent was set out, and we could all sit under it and like listen to you at the same time, because it felt really magical to me and plus if I liked, I was relaxed and comfortable. (Susan)*

Lucy had a strong personal Christian faith and her comments suggested that she had a more symbolic view. Whilst some of her beliefs were strongly held we can see that she recognised there was an interpretation that went beyond the literal in the way she described days as possibly being periods of time rather than actual days.

*Well I'm a really strong Christian so I believe God made it in seven days. But I cannot be sure it's seven days because days in their time could have been weeks or something, so I am not sure about the days concept, but I do believe he made us from like Adam and Eve and as they grew into bigger families they had brothers and sisters and then loads of other things. (Lucy)*

Both Lucy and Susan demonstrated good overall levels of competences over both iterations. Lucy scored particularly highly at the end of the second iteration.

The comments below reflect the “reject” responses reported in the interview. The two pupils Joy and Tom identified themselves as those who believed in rational scientific explanations of the stories. They were both Open to hear other stories and take them seriously but were still able to hold on to their own faith position. Joy on several occasions distanced herself from religious identity with comments such as:

*I'm not like any like a Christian or something I didn't really believe in it. (Joy)*

*I don't believe in some of the stories because I believe how the earth was made differently. (Joy)*

Tom described himself as someone who believed in Science and Physics. It was clear from his comments that his position was one of rejecting literal truth claims. He did not consider faith stories as either literal or symbolic - he considered them irrational.

*My version, I thought it came across with physics and science. They thought it came across with magic and illusions and stuff like that. I'm not sure that it is exactly magic and illusions but it's God, it came across with God and my version used science and physics. (Tom)*

Both Tom and Joy had average overall scores at the end of the second iteration. From this brief overview of the different styles of religious identity the findings appear inconclusive.

An awareness of “geographical” identity markers was also evident in the AIE responses. Luke had a very positive attitude to intercultural encounters and his travels abroad had given him a larger world viewpoint and experience of dialogue across cultures. He demonstrated in his AIE interview a wide range of competences. Luke may have had more encounters outside of school which enabled him to make more of the opportunities within the Intervention.

*Well it was nice I liked to talk to some people from other countries like when I went to Florida.  
(Luke)*

Lucy was also interested in the global dimension of the research team presenting the encounter and recognised the fact that the Story Tent team not only provided an opportunity to talk to people of different faith perspectives but also from different parts of the world; that they had a geographical as well as religious identity.

*I loved how we had people from different parts of the world because usually if we had it we would only have people from round about here maybe from Rugby or Birmingham or Southam, but I liked having people come from around the world to speak to us. (Lucy)*

A tension between geographical and religious identity came up a couple of times within the responses from the AIE interviews and the Adult reflections with the participants in Middlecity Academy. Aamir demonstrated a good understanding of religious Identity markers and was particularly keen to extend his understanding through Related geographical markers. The class had encountered a member who was from Somalia and was a Muslim. This had caused confusion within the class. This concept was Explained well by Zainab who Related her experience of being a British Muslim, to the wider Muslim community that could be worked out in different geographical contexts.

*I used to think that Muslim people and Islam was only in England, but it turns out they live everywhere. (Zainab)*

These comments highlight the impact the Intervention had on raising pupils' awareness of their personal Identity beyond religious definitions into broader cultural Identity.

### **7.3.3 Empathy (EM)**

The AIE describes Empathy as the ability to project oneself into another person's perspective and to be considerate towards their motives, opinions, ways of thinking and their feelings. All the pupils who took part in the interviews demonstrated this competence. The Story Tent engagement of people from other faith traditions provided an opportunity for pupils to exercise Empathy with those who held different worldviews.

There were different types of Empathy demonstrated across the AIE interviews. The most common type of responses came out of pupils' perceptions of the way the faith representatives had felt during the Story Tent day. Many of these comments related to

how it felt to be in a new and strange situation. For example, Ruby when talking about MFR2 suggests that:

*She might have been nervous in case we were a little bit silly and might have made fun about it, but she might be quite excited because then we might know what she believed in. (Ruby)*

Susan demonstrated examples of Empathy in her AIE and was able to Relate her own experiences to those she was working with. This empathetic approach dominated her experience of the intercultural encounters and had an impact on the types of competences that she exhibited across the Intervention. She took on a paternal attitude referring to JFR1 on several occasions as a sweet girl.

*I think JFR1 would be like proud of herself, because she is talking about her religion to other people and there are not many people who are Jews in this school, yeah, so I, it's a really big thing for JFR1 because she is trying, like when we started school, we are trying to fit in so she is trying to fit in with other people as well. (Susan)*

Sumera not only demonstrated Empathy towards the faith representatives delivering the Intervention but also to the characters in the story. Sumera was wholeheartedly relating to Noah as an individual and imagining how it must have felt to be surrounded by injustice and unable to effect any change. Perhaps this was something close to her own heart, which spoke strongly to her during the Intervention.

*I felt really sad. Because no-one was listening to Noah. When the people were fighting, like when we done the play, the people were fighting in the middle of the play. And then I felt really sad because no one was listening to Noah, but Noah was listening to God, so I felt happy about that. (Sumera)*

She was able to identify with the feelings of Noah and Interpret the significance of his actions within the story situation.

Lucy made a very deep empathetic connection with SFR1, which seemed to go beyond imagining how she might have felt. The style of learning presented through the Story Tent Intervention allowed her to ask questions about faith without filtering out God and it appeared to provide an environment of trust and vulnerability where deep learning was able to take place. The encounter is demonstrated below with statements from Lucy alongside SFR1 indicating that the experience was significant not just for the pupils but also for the adult research participants.

*Every word she said about the book and everything about the Sikhs and like she would say it with meaning, so you basically connected with her and every word that came out it went into you kind of. (Lucy)*

And

*... when they listen to the answers you are kind of you can see in their mind that they are so open that you know its kind of not like they are boxing the answers, you feel like you are broadening their mind by telling them that it could be this way. (SFR1)*

The Empathy, Openness and trust expressed in this encounter highlighted the potential benefit to both teacher and learner in building understanding of another perspective, however it does also reinforce the importance of the ethical dimension of framing such encounters in a way that preserves and protects pupil integrity. The influence of the faith representatives in these encounters was recognised and the team commented on the responsibility they felt towards the pupils they had engaged with. These findings have encouraged further reflection on the necessity of establishing guidelines for faith representatives involved in future Story Tent Interventions. Guidelines which would provide support for the faith representatives to help them facilitate a style of dialogue which enabled open communication but protected the pupils' integrity and allowed them to maintain an appropriate emotional distance.



All the pupils who participated in the Intervention demonstrated comments in their AIE interview which were empathetic in outlook. These findings indicate that the SR principles as worked out in the Story Tent facilitate opportunities for pupils to exercise empathetic responses.

#### **7.4 Communicative Awareness**

The AIE describes Communicative Awareness as the ability to recognise different linguistic conventions and use language to explore meaning to reach shared understanding. Whilst there is much philosophical debate surrounding the reality of language and meaning, for the purposes of this research I will consider two aspects of language as used in the classroom: the spoken word and the written word. This two-part approach matches the two dimensions of SR - the reading of the texts and the dialogue that surrounds it. Byram's original model drew on Argyle's eight dimensions of non-verbal communication. I wanted to explore how significant these were in the development of ICC and brief comments have been made to reflect these findings. Information used in this section draws on material from the AIE interviews and adult reflections on the sessions, however it was the group discussion transcripts which demonstrated significant examples of competences being exercised in practical ways.

Before addressing the different aspects of Communicative Awareness, I comment on the significance of the foreign language elements of the Story Tent Intervention. Pupil demonstrated an interest in the original languages that the sacred texts had been written. Their comments indicated an awareness of communication across different languages and referred on occasions to the process of translation. Byram's original model was developed within the foreign language curriculum and was concerned with the competences required to communicate across language. I would argue that this

translation of language demonstrates a similarity with the process of translation across religion.

Pupils' comments throughout the day and in the follow up interviews suggested they were particularly interested in the languages these texts were originally written. The pupils were fascinated to see their own names written in a different language and wanted to know more. This was particularly noticeable in the first iteration and consequently we tried to build on this interest during the second iteration. This was helpful in that it raised pupil Curiosity and sense of personal Identity alongside developing religious literacy and opportunities for further Discoveries to take place. The pupils enjoyed hearing scripture read in its original language and this added something to the mystery of the experience of faith. They were also curious about the nature of translation which provided an interesting basis for discussions.

*They were curious about the Hebrew, so a few people came up to me at the end when we were writing the names that we hadn't put down and they went wow, it's so different! Lots of curiosity, yes lots of curiosity. (SFR1)*

And

*We talked a little bit about the fact that it was originally in Arabic that this was a translation, and some interesting things came up from these discussions as well. (MFR1)*

Pupils were fascinated to hear these ancient languages spoken and to see their names written in Hebrew and Arabic. Some of the children in Middlecity Academy went to the Madrassa in the evening and were familiar with the Arabic texts. Sumera talked about going to the Mosque and how Arabic was different to English.

*It's like very different to English, you know English you can just say it really fast, but you know sometimes you have to struggle a bit in Arabic.*

*RS: So, when you read it in Arabic do you know what the words are that you are reading?*

*Yeah, I do because there is like... you do like its Arabic letters and you have to like sound them out, like ABC. (Sumera)*

Jamila was very proud of the fact that she had read all through the Quran herself and had interesting insights into why the book had originally been translated.

*It's because we have a Quran a Holy book which it is written in and we have all these chapters that it is written in and we think that when the Quran was first revealed in Arabic and when people started translating it they really think it is important to know these stories. So, we know not to do any wrong things like the disbelievers did. (Jamila)*

*I know how to read the Quran but in the Arabic language. I only know how to read it I don't know how to understand it. (Jamila)*

Luke commented on the process of translating and how the meanings might be adjusted in the process.

*No because it was translated, and they had to add words to it to make it more English. (Luke)*

In St Village School George and Alice discussed during the group discussion time of the first iteration whether the texts they were reading had been accurately translated and how this might have an impact on the meanings of the text.

This awareness of foreign language came up more often in Middlecity Academy than the other two schools. This could perhaps be indicative of the more multicultural demographic of the school where foreign languages were spoken within the home context. It would be interesting to explore this dimension in future iterations.

#### 7.4.1 Communicative Awareness Verbal (CAV)

All the pupils who took part in the interviews demonstrated good Verbal Communication. Verbal Communicative Awareness was one of the most commonly coded competence used across the transcripts and reflected comments on the spoken aspects of the Intervention. The group session transcripts provided significant evidence of the way the pupils were demonstrating the competence of Communicative Awareness as worked out in real time. These included comments which indicated they had listened to each other, they could express their experiences and beliefs and interact with the research team and their fellow pupils. The adult observations also recognised significant examples of verbal Communicative Awareness this was particularly noticeable in the first Intervention at St Village School. The team identified that the Y6 class as being particularly able and advanced in their responses through the day. The AIE responses also provided significant evidence of verbal Communicative Awareness. The quotes below express a few examples of the types of comments expressed.

*I listened really carefully to how she was feeling and how she explained it. (Joy)*

*I found it quite easy for us to all say our thoughts. (Lucy)*

*He told me that ... and then I started to understand even more. (Zainab)*

Pupils remembered very clearly things that their friends had said and acted out in the drama session. During the group discussion pupils frequently commented on the specific things they had heard. Mark was particularly good at learning from listening and demonstrated that he was able to draw on observations he had made from all three of the faith stories within the same iteration and noticed key words when discussing his opinions.

*I don't think it is the Quran because the Quran didn't mention much about the animals.*

*(Mark)*

*I think it's the bible because it is closer because it has the words that are, that fit in exactly.*

*(Mark)*

*That is most certainly the Torah because that is one of the key words in the Torah. (Mark)*

Other pupils worked through their understanding in collaborative discussions drawing on each other's experiences to support group learning. The example below shows how Alice who worked on the Quran, Paul who worked on the Bible and Lucy who worked on the Guru Granth Sahib interacted together to sort the texts.

*George: Be fruitful, and multiply...*

*Alice: I know that, it isn't in the Quran.*

*Paul: Yes, and I did that in the play as well.*

*Lucy: And in the Guru Granth Sahib it said produce not multiply.*

*Paul: and when I read it out I said be fruitful and multiply all the animals. (George, Alice,*

*Paul, Lucy)*

The example below also demonstrates the collaborative nature of discovery through speaking and listening together. Mark had worked on the Muslim story, Ruby on the Christian story and Harvey on the Sikh story of creation.

*RS: God creates what He wills. Indeed, God is powerful over all things.*

*Mark: I think that is ours because it said God creates*

*Ruby: But it did say God. Did yours ever say God? I don't think it was just yours that had "H" as a capital. Did yours ever say God in it?*

*Mark: It never said God in ours it said lord. But it never said God. It never said God.*

*Harvey: I'm sure it did*

*Mark: But there was God, but they described it as "He" or "We" but never said God properly but said "Lord"*

*(Mark, Harvey, Ruby)*

Pupils during the normal course of a day at school regularly engage in this style of learning and the Story Tent Intervention matched well with the style of dialogue used in the classroom. The group discussions revealed how the pupils interacted together and how they were drawing on skills often developed through the literacy curriculum.

Pupils and adults commented positively on the effectiveness of story as a vehicle for developing dialogue; a genre which pupils regularly use in school.

*I think it is a very familiar story, so they are not having to learn the story itself, so that crosses that barrier already, so you can go more so deeper straight away because you already know that story. (ST2)*

*I like reading religious stories. (Jamila)*

Moreover, the stories selected for discussion were already part of the pupils' experiences within the school curriculum. The pupils' self-reflections, AIE interviews and responses in the group discussions highlighted how effective the drama had been as a vehicle for learning, many of their comments expressed enjoyment and confidence gained through the process of acting out the story in small groups. During the first Intervention MFR2 observed how effective story was at engaging pupils in open discussion:

*... that story became the basis for them to start talking about another religion. (MFR2)*

And

*... there was a kind of ownership, like it was our story. (MFR2)*

The story appeared to act as a vehicle which delivered insights beyond the factual information that was presented. There was something about the nature of story and the dramatic interpretations which connected to the pupils. As discussed in Chapter 5, Mayer had suggested that there was a strong cognitive dimension to learning through narrative. The story structure appeared to enable pupils to Relate the familiar with the unfamiliar and create meaning from the process.

The research team noticed that as well as providing a vehicle for informative discussion, the drama helped to embed the learning in a way that was easy to recall. The visual impact of watching the stories and the kinetic process of delivering the drama seemed to help the pupils remember detailed information, which enabled them to make informed choices when presented with sorting phrases from religious texts. There were many cases of pupils referring to characters that they had played and different parts they had acted out or said phrases that they had remembered that had helped them to locate texts within the appropriate faith tradition. It was a combination of literary textual cues and recalling details from the drama that were the most effective methods of techniques used in this sorting activity.

*What I found interesting was that a lot of them used what they saw in the play as their back up. They would confirm, yes, they did that, or they didn't do that. The plays really made a big impact on them. (CFR2)*

*... they related most to the plays that they acted out. That was the most important point of recall. (MFR2)*

This pattern of recall was evident in the group transcripts, the AIE interviews as well as the comments from the research team, particularly when reflecting on session three.

Over the research period 18 different dramas were performed and in each of the presentations the pupils created unique and different interpretations of the stories. The

research team recognised the effective way that the pupils worked together with respect and openness towards each other. These are indicators in themselves of the competences being developed through this Intervention. Byram has used drama as a vehicle to facilitate language learning.

*The watchers realise they are to watch and hear everything and regard it as truthful at the time.*  
(Byram and Fleming, 1998: 161)

He recognised that this style of learning elicited a different type of response to the encounter where the very nature of truth claims is suspended as those watching receive the message at face value.

#### **7.4.2 Communicative Awareness Non-verbal (CAN)**

There were fewer comments from the data which indicated an awareness of non-verbal communication. Pupils noticed smiles and facial expressions as indicators of feelings, and they also mentioned tone of voice which also conveyed information. There was evidence to suggest that the physical process of acting out the story had helped pupils understand. The quotes below provide a few examples of the comments made. Lucy describes how the visual impact of the drama had helped her to add meaning to the experience.

*I think because some of the words were difficult to understand but when you are acting, you don't have to ...they will have a visual experience of what's happening. (Lucy)*

She went on to describe how the physical representation of acting out the stories had added insights which would not have been present if it had only been a text-based experience. The combined approach which used all three communicative competences, reading the text, verbal questioning and practical enactment enriched the learning experience.



*I enjoyed doing the play where I, because at first the text was quite hard I found especially the Sikh one, so I read it I asked lots of questions and you know but then doing the play made it like 100 times easier to understand and I think it did for the other children. (Lucy)*

Harvey and Mark recounted how the physical impact of the experience had helped in them remember aspects of the story.

*Mark: Yes, because I can remember all swimming.*

*Harvey: I was doing breast stroke. (Harvey and Mark)*

These comments which referred to the non-verbal dimensions of the encounter were less common than those referring to verbal or text-based communication and potentially less significant in developing intercultural communication.

### **7.4.3 Communicative Awareness Text (CAT)**

Text based Communicative Awareness was also one of the most commented on competence with almost as many comments as those linked to verbal communication. However, whilst all pupils demonstrated verbal competence during the Intervention and following interviews, the data for text-based competence was less conclusive.

The group transcripts revealed that during both iterations there were many references made to the written word and this was evidenced in all three schools across both iterations. The Smalltown Community School was particularly noticeable in the way they processed the text using skills often associated with the literacy curriculum.

The adult observations also recognised the importance of the way the pupils were engaging with the texts. During the first iteration in Middlecity Academy a concern was expressed about the impact of pupils' literacy. The initial impression was that the levels of literacy at the third research school was proving to be a limiting factor in how the pupils were responding to the Intervention.

*To give an example of a conversation I overheard with one of the first activities, ... the boy sitting next to me was saying I have never read a story to the end. (MFR1)*

*You know, maybe their parents don't read or speak English very well, so you know these kinds of things impact how they are able to engage with this idea, of story and books. (MFR1)*

However, by the second session it was clear that the pupils were taking in more than had originally been anticipated and the practical nature of the drama enabled the pupils to engage fully whatever their level of literacy.

*The way that the children responded they had obviously taken a lot in just through reading it which I was surprised at. (RS)*

The Story Tent Intervention provided an opportunity for pupils to develop a deeper understanding of the nature of sacred texts. Pupils demonstrated an awareness of the sacred nature of the stories during the Story Tent Intervention and recognised that they had a special significance to people of faith. They were able to identify how these texts were different to those studied in the literacy curriculum and were respectful in their comments.

During the Intervention we used an English translation of the Jewish, Muslim and Sikh texts. The nature of translation became a source of debate within the research team as they reflected on how the pupils had responded. The texts chosen tried to honour the integrity of the faith tradition whilst still being accessible to pupils. MFR1 and JFR1 were concerned that the translations were conceptually too demanding and prevented some of the pupils from engaging confidently with the material. Reading age was cited as one potential barrier and comprehension was cited as another. Some of the words in the text would not have been experienced through normal discourse. It was suggested that paraphrasing might have made the texts more accessible.

*I know we are using translations but whether it might be worth trying to paraphrase the translations so that it's even more accessible for the children, in terms of the language. (MFR1)*

I identified that this unusual vocabulary had provided some of the most interesting discussions in the afternoon as pupils wrestled with the meanings of some of the more complex words. These words indicated a different style of language, which identified these texts as different to the books they might normally experience in schools.

*But one of the things I think is good about having language that is different, is that you are recognising that these are sacred texts and they are different from other texts (RS)*

After further discussion it was decided that some of the words were interesting and conceptually important to keep in the text whilst others were not essential and could be modified without losing the meaning of the stories.

*I would say on that, if there were some words that they were asking about that were not crucial to the story, that were just a bit difficult so like "take heed" and you know it's quite difficult, I agree with you about things like covenant and lawlessness, (JFR1)*

MFR1 and JFR1 agreed to rework the Noah texts in the light of the experiences of the first iteration; to modify non-essential words whilst keeping those that had sourced the most interesting discussions. It was also agreed that in the second iteration we would provide an opportunity for a short piece of the text to be read in its original language to develop an understanding and appreciation of the richness of the texts. These observations raise the potential to explore how the languages of the original texts might be developed within further iterations of the Story Tent.

Pupils' AIE responses indicated that pupils were aware of the sacred nature of the texts. Harvey was aware of the importance of the texts, describing himself as a Christian and a reader of the Bible. In the first iteration he worked with the Jewish text and in the second

iteration with the Sikh text, both times working outside his own faith tradition. He was aware of the religious significance of the Torah and the Guru Granth Sahib and talked respectfully about these texts.

*Because it's not like any old book, it's a precious book that belongs to Hannah. (Harvey)*

*...and the books that the religious people read are holy, not like the ones we read nowadays.*

*(Harvey)*

Ruby, who identified herself as a Christian and read the Bible, noticed differences in the style of writing in these sacred texts. Drawing from her own experience of the Bible she noticed the Quranic story of Noah had more speech in it than the other two stories.

*Well I think in the Quran it was kind of long, it had lots of speech, and lots of long words and stuff. (Ruby)*

Whilst most children commented on the sacred nature of the story, Paul, who did not align himself with any faith tradition, talked about the story of Noah on Netflix.

*I think it was interesting because I have watched the film and the normal one from the Bible on my Netflix at home and then I've read it in the book of the Bible, but I had never seen it in the Quran before. (Paul)*

Paul was aware that people did have faith positions but was not always secure in applying the relevant vocabulary in appropriate ways. The way he aligns the Hollywood version of Noah with equal weighting to the Biblical and Quranic stories presents a challenge.

Various pupils showed reactions linked to detailed analysis of the text at the sentence level. Some of the pupils recognised that there were patterns in the stories which helped them identify different texts from each other. Zainab, Jamila and Aamir worked together to identify a pattern in the Bible story of creation which was not in the Quran or the Guru Granth Sahib.

*Zainab: And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.*

*Jamila: Oh, that's the Bible because of the pattern, and there was morning and there was evening...*

*RS: Arb... could it be in one of the other ones?*

*Aamir: No*

*RS: why is that?*

*Aamir: Because you keep repeating in that one and you don't repeat it in the other ones.*

*(Zainab, Jamila, Amir)*

They also recognised that significant phrases could be indicators that would mark out the different ways the creation story was presented in the different texts. During the discussion below the group explores which of the three texts the sentence could belong to.

*Zainab: Forever and ever, He is the One, the One Universal Creator.*

*RS: So where do you think it goes?*

*Sumera: Quran,*

*Aamir: Quran,*

*RS: You think it goes in the Quran?*

*Sumera: I think it could go in both, this one and this one.*

*Shazad: Because half of when I was saying it was in the Guru, Granth Sahib.*

*RS: Could it be the bible?*

*Group together: No*

*RS: Why?*

*Jamila: the meaning comes from the sentence.*

*(Aamir, Zainab, Sumera, Shazad, Jamila)*

During the analysis of the group transcripts there were many other examples of comments about patterns or phrases that helped the pupils to sort the texts. This was also noticed by comments from the research team who observed the regular use of remembered phrases as indicators that were linked to specific texts.

Key words were frequently used as an indicator when sorting texts. During the first Intervention the research team had concerns about whether the pupils would be able to understand some of the difficult vocabulary used in sacred texts and the underlying concepts behind these words, however it was these very words that became the focus of some fascinating discussions as the pupils tried to explore the meaning together. The story of Noah was a particularly good story for unusual words and all three schools ended up having discussions around words such as lawless, corrupt and disbeliever.

In St Village School and Middlecity Academy there was discussion about the word disbelievers:

*“Disbelievers isn’t like lawlessness ‘cos it’s badder.” (Sumera)*

And

*Mark: I remember someone in our group asking about corrupt (Mark)*

*Alice: Well in the Bible it doesn’t talk about the world being corrupt, like it doesn’t mention the word corrupt. And lawlessness, it doesn’t mention that. (Alice)*

The debates surrounding these words helped the pupils to explore the different concepts within the faith traditions. God was not filtered out, but part of the discussion and provided an opportunity to develop religious vocabulary as pupils confidently talked through which text the phrases came from.

There were many examples in the group discussion transcripts that demonstrated pupils referring directly to the words that had been used in the texts.

*Joy: Yes, it's the Bible; it's the same words as the Bible. (Joy)*

*Alice: It's the Quran because they say exactly those words. (Alice)*

Whilst this did not open discussion around the concepts being discussed it did indicate the pupils had been listening and absorbing the relevant information.

The pupils' responses to the AIE interviews indicated a range of responses to the text.

For some pupils it was very significant whilst for others it was not mentioned at all.

Those pupils who made significant references to the text tended to be those who had good scores for overall competence. This was seen in the results from Jamila, Zainab, and Lucy who all demonstrated significant reference to the content of the texts and all scored highly for overall Competence. It may be that there are issues related to literacy ability and levels of ICC. This would be an interesting dimension to explore further in future iterations of the Story Tent.

## **7.5 Discovery and Interaction**

The AIE identified the skills of Discovery and Interaction as those that help pupils to acquire new knowledge. This section has highlighted examples of pupils demonstrating skills of descriptive phenomenology. The Story Tent facilitated an exploration of two phenomena alongside each other. The first was the sacred texts themselves; we wanted to enable pupils to have an experience of the content of texts. The second and more important was the phenomenon of the encounter; we wanted to facilitate a safe space in which pupils could exercise intercultural communication.

During the research Interventions and the data analysis phase it was apparent that the pupils were discovering different types of knowledge. In this next section I have chosen

to identify the three types of discovery based on Habermas's theory as worked out during the coding phase. The following comment from Lucy provided an example of some of the different styles of learning that took place.

*I just want to **remember** everything because it has all been a new learning experience. Because like last time you came I looked at Christianity which I looked deeper into my faith, this time I was with SFR1, so it was like really **unique to talk to someone** who talked about a belief that was different to mine. So, I was thinking about what their thinking and how strong it is to them; and **it helps me to understand** how strong I can be of my faith.*

*(Lucy)*

In this comment Lucy wanted to *remember* information. Some of the Discoveries the pupils made were based on remembering factual information about what they had heard or seen during the day, this demonstrated the ability to report and recall new Discoveries. Lucy also commented on the *experience* of learning through the process of dialogue with someone from a different faith tradition. Some pupils commented on how the style of learning had helped them discover new insights. Thirdly Lucy demonstrated an emancipatory experience in her comments about *understanding* how strong her own faith could be in the light of her encounter. She had recognised something new which had changed the way she understood faith in a way she had not been aware of before.

### 7.5.1 Technical Discoveries (DT)

Comments about new factual Discoveries were one of the largest coding groups. When pupils were asked to reflect on their experiences, all of them were able to describe what they had discovered. The results from the pupils' self-assessments were mixed in the first iteration but during the second iteration the average score for Discovery had gone up in all three of the research schools. This could indicate that as pupils became more familiar



with the style of learning they were becoming more able to identify what they had discovered.

Whilst the competence to Discover new information was one of the higher scores across all the data collected, this category was also the one with several negative scores. As part of the coding structure I had wanted to be able to record negative as well as positive responses and during the data analysis it became evident that some of the pupils were making inaccurate discoveries. They were remembering information that was factually incorrect.

Harvey is one such example who struggled to Discover accurate information in both iterations. For example, during the first iteration during the Noah story he repeatedly referred to the story of Joseph: somewhere he had confused the story of Noah's ark with the story of Joseph. This was not a story that we talked about during the visit. During the second iteration where the story of Creation was explored he confused information from the Sikh story with the Muslim one stating that "*...in the Sikh religion they believed God created Adam out of clay.*" This was not correct as Adam was not mentioned in the Sikh creation story. He appears to be mixing up information and not making reliable Discoveries. This could indicate a cognitive or developmental issue; a lack of experience of learning through a dialogic approach or perhaps a lack of religious literacy.

There were other indicators of developmental issues surrounding Discoveries made during the Intervention. For example, when Helen was asked if she could remember any similarities or differences in the drama presentations she focused on the animal masks, which were different, rather than the content of the story. She was not differentiating between significant differences in the stories and was much more focused on the literal differences.

*Er... well in Noah, in our story there are normally more animals, but we didn't have that many animals in ours. (Helen)*

This was also picked up by the research team

*But they did notice one interesting difference one boy said he had noticed that it was different animals in each story, and they picked that up because of the different hats. I had to explain that was a props thing and not a technical difference in the story. I thought that was quite interesting. (ST2)*

Other comments reflected mis-hearing of unusual words, which made it difficult for the pupils to talk with confidence about what they had discovered.

*I remember there were three books. One called the... Carol Granth Sabib, something like that and then there was the Bible and the... I don't know how to pronounce it very well; I think it was the Karan (Joy)*

These types of comments highlight the need to reinforced aspects of religious literacy during the Intervention to support the pupils in making accurate Discoveries, which can then be remembered.

There were more examples of errors in Discovery in the first iteration than the second. This matched the findings from the self-assessments. During the Noah story five of the pupils had made mistakes in the information they had discovered with only one pupil making a mistake in the Creation story. At the end of the first iteration where 12 of the 16 participants who had participated recounted three or more Discoveries, however during the second iteration 15 of the 16 participants had recounted three or more Discoveries, a slight increase. During the second iteration pupils were given some strategies to help them ask questions to Discover new information as part of the teaching Intervention. Whilst it is only a tentative suggestion it does appear that pupils were

becoming better able to Discover new information after the teaching strategy, it would be interesting to explore this dimension further.

### 7.5.2 Practical Discoveries (DP)

There were fewer comments that demonstrated pupils' awareness of the process of making new Discoveries. This suggested that it might be more difficult and cognitively demanding. For those pupils who did demonstrate this awareness there were comments which indicated pupils were discovering how to interact with their peers, teachers and faith representatives. Other comments indicated an awareness of the importance of dialogue and others about the style of learning presented through the drama.

Sumera talked about how she was learning through a collaborative approach with her peers and teachers and how as they worked together and discussed the meaning a shared understanding was reached.

*And we learnt that the group that we were in, the group we were acting out things and then, we didn't understand properly but, then Miss S told us but then we still don't understand, but then we finally understand it. (Sumera)*

Lucy also demonstrated an awareness of the learning process in her comments about asking questions

*...if we didn't understand and then Henry or Angela would explain it better. (Lucy)*

Alice asked some challenging questions about faith practises. It is clear from her encounters that she was using and developing questioning skills to discover new information.

*Well I asked her about any diets like special diets she had to go on, like being a Jew and I also asked her about the pilgrimage.*

*RS: What did she say about her pilgrimage journey?*

*She said it was very fun and different to a holiday um... and she said she really enjoyed it, and how she had to sleep like under leaves and stuff... (Alice)*

There was more evidence of process-based Discoveries in Middlecity Academy and this was the case in both iterations. The school ethos is very much aligned with the experiential learning based on the principles of Yada, Shalom and Rabbi. This style of learning matched very well with that of SR, which presents a faith representative to present the learning through shared experiences in a holistic way. This context may have had an impact on how the pupils engaged with the encounter and the emphasis they placed on the discovery process.

### **7.5.3 Emancipatory Discoveries (DE)**

There were fewer comments demonstrating emancipatory Discoveries, again suggesting these may be more conceptually or cognitively demanding than the factual Discoveries. Some of the pupils' comments indicated pupils were making Discoveries which had changed their understanding in personal ways. Helen was one of the pupils who had made few new Discoveries and she was not able to remember MFR2's faith position despite working with her for the whole day. However, in the group discussion time she did appear to be involved in some deep learning. As the pupils discussed why the villagers in the Quranic story were bad, Helen began to realise the significance that some of them were believers and some of them were non-believers.

*RS: Who is they?*

*Mark: All the bad villagers,*

*RS: Or can you remember what word did they use?*

*Mark: Um... the bad, no ...*

*Ruby: The unbelievers.*

*RS: Ah, and you think it was so...*

*Ruby: There were the believers and the non-believers.*

*Helen: Yeah there were! (A moment of recognition)*

*(Helen, Mark, Ruby)*

Helen identified herself strongly as a Christian and yet perhaps did not have an understanding that there were other people who were not Christians. Realising that others could hold different beliefs according to Piaget is a cognitive stage of development, it could have been that Helen was not at this developmental stage. For Helen, discovering that not all people were believers was a moment of deep learning. If people believe different things, then the whole comparative interfaith experience makes sense. Without this fundamental understanding it is hard to develop the other ICC. It was unfortunate that Helen did not take part in the second Intervention; this realisation may have enabled her to make more informed discoveries during the second iteration.

George made statements which indicated emancipatory learning had taken place. During his AIE interview he Explained that his experience of reading fantasy stories was different from reading sacred texts which he believed to be true, a literal interpretation of the texts. During the group discussion time his reflections suggested a change in outlook and an ability to recognise that people can hold different beliefs in parallel. The reflection suggests that George is developing an ability to Tolerate Ambiguity which enabled him to hold onto his own belief whilst allowing another to believe something different.

*So, it doesn't have to be exactly right. So, which one would actually be true then? I don't know, maybe it's just what they believe. (George)*

Some pupils made Discoveries about how they viewed God. Luke was challenged to think about the nature of God. He believed that God was always good to people. His experience of working on the Quranic story of Noah had challenged him to think more deeply about the nature of God.

*Yes, it um... made me think differently about God, that he is not always that good to people even if they are evil, I thought that even if they were evil that he wouldn't. (Luke)*

Zainab also had her perspective of God challenged. Through the process of reading stories from other faith traditions she had begun to realise just how important Allah was to her.

*AM: What struck you when you were reading it?*

*Zainab: About the Allah, the God, and then I never knew that it was um very important to me. (Zainab)*

These comments help to demonstrate that there were emancipatory elements at work during the Intervention. Whilst all pupils had Discovered new factual information, some of them were making mistakes in remembering accurately. This highlighted the importance of religious literacy and remembering that, whilst the approach was interpretive, there were religious phenomena that needed to be taught and explained. There were some indicators that there were developmental issues in how pupils made Discoveries about the texts and the encounter. It would be interesting to explore further how pupils' developmental maturity impacted their engagement with others and their ability to make accurate Discoveries.

## **7.6 Interpret and Relate**

The AIE described the skills of Interpreting and Relating as the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or

events of one's own culture. This skill involved the ability to decentre, to Relate what was already known, to find similarities and differences and finally to make comparisons so that pupils could Interpret and translate the meaning. This skill mapped on to the interpretive hermeneutical approach proposed by Flood.

In this group of competences that there appeared to be significant differences in the way pupils responded. I wanted to investigate those less frequently displayed to explore which factors might be influencing these and whether there was potential for a hierarchy of competences. The next section provides examples of the group transcripts, the adult comments and the AIE coded transcripts to explore whether the competences were conceptually different.

### **7.6.1 Explain (SE)**

There was significant evidence of pupils' ability to Explain their experiences during the group session transcript. This was especially noticeable in Smalltown Community School and Middlecity Academy. During the AIE, pupils were asked to describe what they could remember from the Story Tent day and all of them were able to Explain what happened, some more extensively than others. Within this category there was a wide range of abilities demonstrated. Some pupils Explained events in detail while others made more simple responses. For those who Explained in detail, each complete sentence was given a code mark. This provided some differentiation within this category and recognised the different levels of ability. Below are two examples, one detailed response from the top end of the scale and one limited response from the lower end of the scale.

*Well first, when we first met, we were all sitting in a circle and we were all telling each other what our names meant and why we were given our names. Then we were introduced to three Holy Books which are very important to some religious people. They are the Quran for Islamic people, the Torah for Jewish people and the Bible for Christian people and we got into three*

*groups and we were learning new things about each story and what similarities they had and what differences they had. (Jamila)*

*You had to... there, there, there, were pieces from the Bible, the Quran and the Torah. (Aamir)*

These comments suggest pupils were able to apply a descriptive phenomenology to the encounter and Explain what they had encountered in a similar way to the comments demonstrated in the discovery section above. Since all the pupils were able to describe some of the events which took place; this did not appear to be conceptually demanding, rather a recounting of an experience.

### **7.6.2 Relate (SR)**

There was significant evidence of pupils' ability to Relate the texts to each other and their own personal experiences during the group session transcript. This was especially noticeable in Smalltown Community School and Middlecity Academy. During the AIE interviews all the pupils demonstrated this competence during both iterations. Below are three examples of comments from each of the different research schools that demonstrated the ability to Relate their learning.

In St Village School, George's comments suggested an objective analytical approach in relating the texts to each other. He had worked with the Sikh creation story but was able to Relate aspects of the other drama interpretations. He focused on the details of the vocabulary in the texts to describe similarities and differences.

*Well there was somethings that were the same were that God was very powerful, different Gods were very powerful. And they all created the world. And some differences were that they talked about er... the days and nights and evenings and mornings, some they just said it was created on different days. (George)*



In Smalltown Community School, Mark demonstrated the ability to Relate what he had experienced in the morning drama session to his experience of the creation story from the Bible.

*Yes. And there were extra things in the Quran that the Christian one didn't have and there were extra things in the Christian one that the Quran didn't have. (Mark)*

In Middlecity Academy, Susan's comments demonstrate she was able to Relate the experience of worship in each of the three stories to compare the different responses to God in the creation stories she had encountered.

*Um, well in the Guru Garab, um what do you call it there was um they were like just going around in circles praising the God ... I think it was called the Bible, I can't remember what they were doing to praise God. I think they were just like er... they were just happy to see the God... and then in the Quran they were all like on their knees. They were praising their God there. (Susan)*

Whilst some of the pupils Related the different contents of the texts, other pupils Related the encounter through their own understanding of the world. For example, Ruby thought that a boat would have been a much better place for Noah's son to seek refuge than higher ground. She found this a strange response to danger. Paul Related his understanding of the world to practical aspects of the boat building. He asked questions about how the animals would all fit into the ark as he tried to reconcile in his mind how that would work out in real life.

All the pupils who took part in the Intervention were able to demonstrate the ability to Explain and Relate what had happened. However, some of the comments demonstrated an ability to apply their learning and Relate it within a context. This ability I would describe as a higher order process of thinking. It takes one idea and draws conclusions from it based on previous understanding. These comments are explaining why

something happened rather than what happened. Lucy demonstrates this in her comments below:

*Well I found out that Muslims because they believed God created them out of Clay and breathed life into them and so Muslims don't believe in evolution, they believe God made them.*

*(Lucy)*

Jamila also Explained and Related her personal understanding of the Quran to the personal experience of living as a person of faith. She Explained why the Quran helps believers to live and Relates the translated text to a guide for personal living.

*It's because we have a Quran a Holy book which it is written in and we have all these chapters that it is written in and we think that when the Quran was first revealed in Arabic and when people started translating it they really think it is important to know these stories. So, we know not to do any wrong things like the disbelievers did. (Jamila)*

These examples I would argue demonstrated a deeper level of thinking than those of which simply explained events that had happened or related texts or personal experiences. However, I did not code them as an Interpretation as they demonstrated pupils' ability to Explain why something was believed rather than inferring or Interpreting new meaning to the encounter.

### **7.6.3 Interpret (SI)**

There were fewer examples of pupils Interpreting their learning during the transcribed group session and these were more evident in the comments made by the pupils from St Village School. This finding was matched by the data collected through the AIE interviews where nine out of the twelve examples of Interpretative comments took place in St Village School.

During the first Intervention, the research team were so impressed with the approach of the pupils working in St Village School that they commented on their ability to decentre and ask probing questions.

*... and they weren't scared to say things they didn't know and ask questions like from a place of uncertainty. (JFR1)*

Through talking with the teacher, she confirmed they were a particularly able Y6 class and suggested that their recent exposure to a local debating competition could have developed an understanding of dialogue in a way that the other two schools had not.

The following quotes illustrate the types of Interpretations the pupils exhibited.

Through the AIE interview process Luke was able to reflect on his learning and Relate what he knew about the nature of God to what he had found out during the iteration and then Interpreted his understanding in the light of his reflection.

*RS: So do you think that the God that MFR2 talks about is the same God a Christian might talk about?*

*Luke: Well I... I don't think so.*

*RS: You don't think so?*

*Luke: I don't know it's not that much different though, but...*

*RS: So what do you think God is like?*

*Luke: Well I think he is just kind and helpful.*

*RS: So do you think God would punish people?*

*Luke: He might do, he would if it's only really bad things and apparently in MFR2's story it was really bad they were doing evil. (Luke)*

Lucy demonstrated the ability to Relate and Interpret what she was reading to her understanding of the world. It was a very mature and profound insight. As she heard the description of the way Akal created the world and she compared it to the three states of water: ice, water and gas matching the ground, sea and air. Below is the text followed by the comments made by Lucy made in response to reading it.

*Then Satguru says:*

*With the one word of Akal, the universe was created.*

*Satguru describes the process as:*

*...from the true one (Akal), air (gases) were created.*

*From air, water was created.*

*From water the three worlds were created, with Akal's divine light within all bodies.*

*(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, p. 1037-38).*

*Yes, so basically it was like the outline. So, in the Bible it talks more about like the trees and the things you can see, but in the Guru Granth Sahib it talks about things like gases which it didn't say about... I loved the part about the three worlds; it talked about the ground, the sea, and the air... (Lucy)*

This same Interpretation was made by the drama group from AR2 who also observed the similarity of the process of creation to the three states of water. These types of Interpretation were much less frequent than relating and I would suggest indicates higher order thinking.

There were examples of practical Interpretations as described below:

*Yes, but they tried to visualise the shape of the ark and what the ark means, and how would that look like and how would the birds be accommodated. (MFR2)*

*One of the things I really liked was when you said what does that mean be fruitful and multiply and one of the girls said - Well you know fruit is sweet and so he probably means that you should be sweet to each other. (CFR2)*

There were other examples of Interpretations which were conceptually more complex and worked out through the process of dialogue:

*RS: who is in charge is it Noab or God do you think?*

*Paul: I think Noab because it doesn't say God was controlling him, it just says Noab was doing it to see God. (Paul)*

Other examples became apparent through the comments made by the research team. Many of the questions the pupils asked were seeking to clarify interpretations for example:

*If Adam was the first human being, then it makes us all his children. (MFR2 2AR2 S3)*

*They were asking will humans be evolving further, what will we be like in a couple of hundred or thousands of years? (SFR1)*

There were examples of pupils demonstrating the ability to Interpret what they were learning but these were fewer than those that Explained and Related pupils' findings.

## **7.7 Critical Cultural Awareness (CCA)**

The AIE describes CCA as an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries. There were only a few examples of pupils who demonstrated this competence. The adults observed three occasions when pupils were demonstrating this competence, the first in the drama session at Middlecity Academy and the second two in the drama and Q&A sessions at St Village School.

MFR1 observed that through working on the story of the Quran the pupils wanted to know whether the story could be found in other books, which opened up an opportunity to explore where the story had come from and how it Related to other faith traditions.

*They had some really good conversations they were like they wanted to know whether the story of Noah is like in other books as well you know. Then we spoke about kind of like Abrahamic religions and we had then like Abraham was here and then you have like Islam, and Christianity came from that. (MFR1)*

CFR3 observed in response to a question on head coverings that in Islam that head covering has been part of the Christian tradition as well.

*I wanted to make the point that in all religions we have a sort of um sense of respect. The way we express it is different, but all religions have a sense of respect and modesty and how to dress appropriately even if it changes over time. (CFR3)*

Through the analysis of the AIE data a few of the pupils made comments demonstrating Critical Cultural Awareness. There were slightly more examples of these in the second iteration, but the difference is small.

Zainab was able to recognise through her encounters with Henry that a Christian could be from England or from Africa and if this was the case then it could be applied it to her own faith tradition and recognised the meta-narrative that faith is geographically flexible.

*I used to think that Muslim people and Islam was only in England, but it turns out they live everywhere. (Zainab)*

Lucy was aware that SFR1 had values which were strongly held and that she was able to present them in a way that was both honest to her faith tradition but also personally enriching. When Lucy evaluated this behaviour in the light of her own values it encouraged her to realise that she too could hold strong beliefs.

*So, I was thinking about what their thinking and how strong it is to them; and it helps me to understand how strong I can be of my faith. (Lucy)*

Joy had an empathetic approach to the day and the comments she made drew on her personal experiences. For Joy, who was a relational based communicator, her evaluation of the day's events drew on her experiences of conflict in the playground to the cultural significance of how religious difference should be approached. Joy recognised the significance of faith and the sensitive and personal importance of religious beliefs.

*Because if there was someone, like if there was an argument and you find you have got to stick up for what you believe in. But in a religion, it's kind of hard not to hurt the people's feelings about how you feel. (Joy)*

The pupils who demonstrated Critical Cultural Awareness all expressed a strong faith Identity and yet from different faith positions: Zainab a Muslim with a literal style of interpretation, Lucy a Christian with a symbolic style of interpretation and Joy a scientific rationalist with a rejection style of interpretation. They also all expressed comments demonstrating their ability to Tolerate Ambiguity. It would be interesting to explore further whether there is a link between the ability to Tolerate Ambiguity whilst maintaining a strong personal Identity to develop Critical Cultural Awareness.

## **7.8 Research Team Reflections**

Whilst an analysis of the adult's response had not been part of the original research design, as the project developed there appeared to be an overlap in the comments the pupils were making and those being made by the teachers and faith representatives. I wanted to try to understand the thoughts of the research team and explore further whether this was the case. The team were asked to reflect on their personal experiences and respond to a simple researcher's questionnaire (RQ) at the end of the research

programme. Through grounded methods of data analysis, I reviewed the transcripts from the session interviews and the post Intervention reflections looking for patterns and themes in their responses. It appeared from the data that significant learning had taken place amongst the research team.

Through the dialogue process researchers and pupils were able to explore the sacred texts together and on several occasions the pupils offered new insights and interpretations which had deepened the understanding of the adult participants. I have chosen a selection of comments to illustrate some of these insights.

Working on the text from the Guru Granth Sahib one of the pupils noticed that the creation story did not contain any reference to the creation of humans, a new insight for SFR1

*Things that maybe I wouldn't have thought about myself or raised with them. Like one of them said there is no mention of humans being created in Sikhism creation story. (SFR1)*

Working on the text from the Bible one of the Muslim pupils noticed that in the creation story opposites were presented for example light and dark, day and night etc.

*That was amazing; I had never noticed that before. All the times when I have read the Bible I had never noticed that. (RS)*

The teachers tended to be more focused on the learning process and the impact the Intervention had made on the pupils' perceptions. Their comments tended to reflect aspirations to improve the teaching practice within their individual school contexts.

*I think from my point of view being able to see them talking to people of different faiths instead of it just being me saying this is what these people think is very good. (ST1)*

*He has learnt to be respectful of everybody from every religion that is exactly what you want them to be taking away. (ST2)*



*I now feel better equipped and confident to discuss differences in religion because it has in the past been a source of disagreement between certain pupils. (ST3)*

Whilst the teachers reflected on pupil responses, the faith representatives tended to make observations relating to personal insights and reflections on faith. During the process of the Story Tent project some of the team had felt challenged to recognise personal prejudices and to listen to people who they may not have previously encountered. The concept of breaking down prejudice and building friendships is one of the Scriptural Reasoning principles, these comments suggests that the Story Tent Intervention had achieved that learning outcome for the researchers below.

*I certainly feel that I am better able to engage with people with whom I disagree and respect them, whether they hold beliefs which are similar to mine or not. Specifically, I feel that my listening skills have improved, and I feel that this is a key factor in interfaith relations.*

*(MFR1)*

*Through learning more about Muslims and getting in contact with a real person it has made me reflect on how I look at them. Trying to understand them requires going into a deeper dialogue and challenging our preconceptions, and that's what's happened to me. Now I don't look at other religious people in the same way, but remembering that the person goes first, and that how they engage with their own religion can be an example for me in my own religion. (CFR3)*

Alongside this openness to explore different perspectives some representatives commented on their ability to maintain and develop an understanding of their own faith tradition. This dual dimension of understanding another perspective and strengthening your own is another one of the principles of SR.

*Through understanding different points of view a greater clarity of personal perspective grows; in understand another you understand yourself more fully. (ST1)*

All of those who took part in the research team commented on how quickly they had made deep connections with people from different faith traditions and expressed a desire to develop this work further. They commented on how much they had personally gained from the Story Tent Intervention recommended further development and suggested moving the project beyond the classroom and into the wider community.

*I think it should be a fundamental part of the curriculum, noticing similarities and differences, along with celebrating the diversity of our country. (ST3)*

*I think that everyone should have the opportunity to work with people from other faiths, particularly within this collaborative approach. (ST1)*

*This suggests that perhaps future story tents could be part of a wider community based interfaith dialogue where we could further discuss our experiences and religions. (SFR1)*

From the comments and observations discussed in this Chapter I would suggest that there is significant benefit for the adult participants and the potential for developing a Story Tent Intervention which reaches beyond the classroom and into the wider community.

## **7.9 Summary of Findings**

The analysis of the data above suggests that SR principles, as presented through the Story Tent Intervention, did facilitate opportunities for pupils to exercise ICC. There were examples of all the competences being demonstrated at some point during the intervention and all the pupils who took part in the AIE interview provided examples of some of the competences. Listed below is a summary of the findings from this discussion.

Some ICC competences were evident in all pupils in all schools through both iterations. These included Empathy, Verbal Communicative Awareness, the ability to Discover, Explain and Relate findings.

All the pupils were able to demonstrate the verbal Communicative Awareness required to participate in interfaith dialogue. The use of story was an effective way to engage pupils and develop dialogue and the use of drama presented an unexpected pedagogic learning style which motivated and engaged pupils many of whom expressed the drama as significant in their reflections and self-assessments.

Some pupils demonstrated a wide range of competences while others demonstrated relatively few. Most pupils were able to recognise similarities and differences and Relate the stories to each other. Some pupils were able to offer Interpretations in the light of their own personal faith positions. Some of the ICC were conceptually more demanding and less frequently demonstrated in the pupils' AIE responses. This might suggest higher order developmental cognitive thinking was required for some of the competences.

Many of the pupils were able to use the religious texts to develop deeper understanding of faith traditions and insights into their own personal faith journey. Pupils were able to engage with the religious vocabulary in the texts allowing the original authentic meanings to be explored. God was not filtered out.

Pupils demonstrated that through the Intervention they were making new Discoveries about religious traditions and their own worldview. During the first iteration some pupils were making basic factual errors indicating issues with religious literacy. During the second iteration pupils made more comments about what they were learning and made less factual errors.

Only a very few pupils demonstrated Critical Cultural Awareness however, examples were demonstrated in all three schools and from three different faith positions. All those demonstrating Critical Cultural Awareness also had a strong sense of personal Identity and could Tolerate Ambiguity.

Through participating in the Story Tent Intervention, the research team developed ICC themselves. They were able to Tolerate Ambiguity, make new Discoveries and develop new insights through working alongside the pupils and fellow researchers.

## 8 A DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS

This Chapter of my thesis presents the fourth part of the iterative cycle: that of reflection. I *planned* an Intervention in the light of the current available literature, I *acted* out the research design in line with a combined phenomenological and hermeneutic methodology and I *observed* and analysed the data. In this Chapter I have present my *critical reflections* on the findings of the research. I have identified key themes that have emerged out of the research and suggested possible future opportunities for future research opportunities to develop the work in more depth.

Whilst I make no claim to uniformity or universality of the experience, I suggest the data presented in this thesis has provided evidence that demonstrates the Story Tent Intervention did enable pupils to exercise ICC. The responses from the day and in the subsequent AIE interviews demonstrated engagement with the learning episodes and practical examples of how ICC outlined by Byram were worked out in the primary school context. From these research findings I have drawn out several possibilities and challenges for moving the work forward.

The findings that came out of the research have been presented in two sections. The first is a response to the primary research question which considered the possibilities for and challenges to the development of SR strategies for promoting ICC. The second section consists of secondary findings which came out of the research which I considered to be of significance. Each finding is followed by possible areas for future investigation which is aligned with the practice of AR methodology.

## 8.1 Primary Findings

### 8.1.1 The Use of the Story Format was Important to the Success of the Intervention

There was something about the nature of story and their dramatic interpretations which connected to the pupils and enabled them to retain information beyond the factual information. Copley (2004) suggested there were some drawbacks in using the word ‘*story*’ in the context of the Bible and preferred to use the term ‘*narrative*’. My research experiences have however led me to the conclusion that the advantages of using the word ‘*story*’ outweigh the disadvantages. The story structure enabled the pupils to quickly enter into the world of others in a way that suspended truth claims. However, the sacredness of these stories was preserved through presenting them by a community faith representative which helped preserve its meaning and authenticity.

Pupils in primary schools are familiar with the story as a literary genre in the national literacy curriculum. They are familiar with reading and writing stories that contain plot, character and hidden meanings. They can recognize the structure of a plot which contains a beginning, a middle and an end; the concepts of characters who can be heroes or villains; and are familiar with the concept that stories present a search for meaning rather than a representation of truth. As discussed in Chapter 3 we see that Mayer had suggested a strong cognitive dimension to learning through narrative. In translating the codes embedded in the story pupils he argued were able to access insights from their previous experiences to develop meanings.

During this research pupils demonstrated the ability to apply basic narrative constructs and overlay it onto their personal experiences. They demonstrated the ability to explain and relate what they were learning through the stories to their personal experiences of life as suggested by Mayer. He hypothesized that through the hermeneutical process of

interpretation, pupils could apply new information to past experiences and extract meaning from the story. The story becomes more than just the words expressed externally and takes on a new form internally as pupils look for features that match their own experiences, fill in the gaps in their imagination, and expand their understanding. It is through this process of relating and interpreting that new meanings and understandings were constructed.

The evidence from the AIE in particular indicates that pupils were able to extract meanings from the stories and demonstrate as Bruner (1990) described a “push to construct a narrative.” During the process of hearing stories and acting them out I found that the pupils did look for causal explanations to bring meaning out of the text. This hermeneutical dimension makes it particularly useful in developing ICC particularly those skills involved with interpreting and relating as outlined in Byram’s model.

The research team also noticed that as well as providing a vehicle for meaning making, the story helped to embed the learning in a way that was easy to recall. As discussed in Chapter 3, Bartlett (1932) explored the relationship between narrative and memory. His schema theory suggested that memory was an active reconstructive process influenced by past experiences and understanding of personal worldviews. What he found was that over time participants remembered the main ideas of a story but in a shorter form and that elements were both lost and gained and that elements that were unfamiliar were changed to make sense of it within their own culture.

During this research I found that the visual impact of watching the stories and the kinetic process of delivering the drama helped the pupils to remember detailed information. There were many cases of pupils referring to characters that they had played and the different parts they had seen acted out which had helped them to sort the texts into the

appropriate faith tradition. This pattern of recall was evident in the group transcripts, the AIE interviews as well as the comments from the research team.

The genre of story helped pupils to engage with other cultures at a level which they felt familiar and comfortable. It enabled them to step outside themselves and explore another perspective through taking on the part of a character in the drama. Pupils were able to suspend truth claims and explore different perspectives in practical and engaging ways which facilitated dialogue with their peers and a faith representative.

The practical nature of the activities was accessible to pupils across abilities and each of the teachers noticed that pupils who did not normally shine in academic contexts were able to contribute and engage in the learning. The practice of listening to stories created a unique space which allowed pupils to suspend judgement, Tolerate Ambiguity and imagine the views of another. It did not require a recognition or analysis of whether the content was true. There was a shared understanding that in this genre there is hidden meaning embedded to be explored and discovered through the imagination. It allowed pupils to develop understanding, through relating and interpreting their experiences through empathetic engagement with an imagined world. A place to explore identity both on a personal and cultural level.

**Areas to explore further:**

A search for meaning is implicit in the nature of story, and yet there were few observed examples of pupils demonstrating an interpretive response to the Intervention. It would be interesting to take a more intentional approach to investigating the pupils' ability to interpret the stories in their search for meaning.



### **8.1.2 SR's Style of Dialogue is Distinctive in its Ability to Promote ICC**

The Story Tent Intervention provided a space of hospitality where meaningful dialogue could be encountered across faith traditions. SR proponents have highlighted the importance of the place of meeting to provide a place of hospitality where different voices can be heard and understood. Ford (Ford and Pecknold, 2006) describes this as an “in-between” space. Buber (1937) also refers to this the dialogical space as an “in-between” place or a “space of meeting” where two or more voices can present different perspectives. In developing an age appropriate adaptation of SR principles, I wanted to honour the importance of the space of meeting and chose to place the concept of the “in-between” as this provided an interesting dimension which is central to the theoretical underpinnings of SR.

The findings from this research indicate that the pupils' interpretive responses could be divided into two dimensions. Firstly, there was the meso-level concept of the tent as a place of meeting where class communities could develop an understanding of the different perspectives of faith stories from the different faith traditions. Many of the pupils' comments reflected discoveries which indicated deeper insights and learning which had developed an understanding of core faith beliefs where God was not filtered out. Secondly there was the micro-level dimension which applied to individual spaces for interpretive dialogue where pupils' individual responses to one-to-one dialogue demonstrated examples of ICC. The Story Tent Intervention aimed to provide space for both.

During the research project I became increasingly aware of the significance of this third space or “in-between” space as a space of translation. Ricoeur (2006) describes the concept of “Linguistic hospitality” a space where participants can relate to each other and develop an understanding of the other through hospitable encounters. Moyaert

(2011) described interreligious dialogue as a place where linguists can become capable of religious translation. Both Byram's model and the AIE interview grew out of a basis of modern foreign languages. This direct reference to translation suggests it highly likely that competences which would be used in the foreign language curriculum to translate could be applied to the process of translating religion.

My experience of the Story Tent Intervention has led me to suggest that the process of SR has an "in-between" space of translation which enabled pupils to translate meanings embedded in the faith stories through the encounters they experienced with people of faith. This translation I suggest has been demonstrated through the discoveries they have made about the meso-level interpretations of faith stories and micro level personal discoveries as they have related their own understanding to those who held different opinions.

One of the advantages of SR is that it does not just bring two voices into the place of meeting - it brings three. If we extend this "in-between" space beyond two voices and place a third into the space it becomes much more dynamic, complex and able to hold an infinite number of interpretations. This multiple perspective enabled a richer understanding of the stories from three different perspectives, offering a "fusion of perspectives" as described by Gadamer.

During the story tent encounters pupils were able to explore three different interpretations of one faith story. Having this third point of reference enabled pupils to explore meaning across multiple boundaries and added depth of perspective when describing similarities and differences. This bringing together of multiple opinions enabled an encounter which was not dependent on binary positions which pushed pupils into reflections on which was right, and which was wrong it allowed multiple positions of

interpretation. As Burbules (1993) advocated a place where multiple opinions can be held together without consensus being necessary.

The style of interreligious dialogue presented through the Story Tent Intervention enabled pupils to ask questions about both what the stories meant, but also questions about the realities of faith. One recurring theme that came out of the research was the deep level of the pupils' questioning. The research team commented on the type of questions the pupils were asking which demonstrated a level of curiosity and deep thinking that had not been anticipated.

#### **Areas to explore further:**

Having identified the “in-between” or third space as a place of interreligious translation it would be interesting to explore in more depth what is happening in this space. In foreign language translation there are some words which are irreducible to another language.

Moyeart (2011) and Ricoeur (2006) suggest this is also true in interreligious translation. It would be interesting to explore how primary pupils use interreligious dialogue to translate another religious faith position in the light of their own understanding of faith.

#### **8.1.3 The Use of Drama is a Powerful Motivator for Practising ICC**

The Story Tent Intervention applied a teaching pedagogy which used drama as a method of delivering SR in an age appropriate way. In the research design the drama session was planned as a method of engaging pupils whilst ensuring the conditions which would facilitate meaningful encounters as outlined in Allport's Contact Theory (Allport, 1954).

The activity gave each member of the group equal status, provided a cooperative activity with common goals and support for an authority figure. I found that as the pupils engaged in the planning and staging of their story it was a particularly helpful format

which provided opportunities for the pupils to demonstrate ICC in real time during the process of participating in the activity.

Whilst the drama session felt stressful and demanding at times for the research team and pushed them out of their comfort zone, the comments that came out of the pupils' self-assessments at the end of the session indicated that they had enjoyed the learning experience and found it particularly helpful in raising curiosity and discovery. The process of putting together a drama required the pupils to be communicatively aware and to be open and respectful of each other's ideas. Over the research period 18 different dramas were performed and in each of the presentations the pupils created unique and different interpretations of the stories. These are indicators in themselves of the competences being developed through this Intervention. Finding ways to present the stories required curiosity and an empathetic attitude towards the faith representative with a willingness to suspend judgement if the story did not match the experience of the pupils. As a group they worked together to discover the meaning of the story and interpret it so that they could present the meanings behind the stories to their fellow class mates. This type of pedagogical model does present an ideal opportunity to develop the ICC outlined by Byram.

**Areas to explore further:**

One of the issues that came out of this style of learning was the influence the faith representative had during the group time. Whilst I ensured there were always two adults engaged in the drama session, one to facilitate and the other to support, there were opportunities for participants to use their positions unwisely. I would be keen in further iterations to develop research guidelines and a training session for the religious participants to outline the boundaries of discussion and what is and is not appropriate to talk about in a primary classroom context. I was not aware of any such issues arising

during the project but conscious of the fact that in these situations, where different perspectives were being shared so honestly and prejudices are being challenge, there needs to be clear guidance and space for pupils to opt out or talk further if they felt uncomfortable in any way. It is important to respect pupils' personal faith identity.

## **8.2 Secondary Findings**

There were several unexpected outcomes which came out of the research. I was primarily interested in the impact the Intervention had on promoting ICC, however during this investigation I developed insights into how primary pupils and the research team were demonstrating ICC in the process of engaging with the Intervention. These I have presented as secondary findings as they present areas of interest for further research opportunities.

### **8.2.1 There is a Cognitive Hierarchy within the ICC, Relating to Skills**

The responses from the AIE interviews indicated that some of the pupils demonstrated many examples of ICC while others only offered a few. The models presented by Byram and Dearnorff did not indicate any differentiation in conceptual difficulties of the competences outlined. However, from my data analysis there appeared to be some competences which were more conceptually demanding than others. This differentiation appeared most noticeable in the two skills outlined by Byram those of Discovery and Interaction; and the ability to Interpret and Relate.

In the discovery section, the results from the AIE interviews indicated significant numbers of comments that demonstrated *technical*, factual information, with fewer demonstrating *practical* or *emancipatory* knowledge. These discoveries tended to consist of a recount or recall of information which I would suggest are conceptually less demanding than insights into the process of learning or active emancipatory outcomes. There were

fewer comments about how learning was taking place or why something was particularly significant. The fact that these were less often demonstrated could indicate that the AIE research tool did not present opportunities for pupils to demonstrate this competence or that there were other factors involved.

Comments which demonstrated practical discoveries were clustered disproportionately at Middlecity Academy with all the pupils demonstrating this competence during the research. This school presents its learning through an approach which places the concepts of Shalom, Yada and Rabbi at the heart of its ethos. This holistic approach demonstrated across the school curriculum may have predisposed pupils to notice the impact of the process of learning. It would be interesting to explore further the factors that enable these pupils to demonstrate more examples of practical discoveries.

The cognitive skills section of interpreting and relating also demonstrated significant differences in the pupils' responses. All the pupils who took part across each of the three schools were able to explain what they had discovered and relate their findings to their experiences however, there were many fewer examples of pupils demonstrating the skill of interpretation or critical cultural awareness.

Comments which demonstrated the ability to interpret were clustered disproportionately with the older Y6 pupils in St Village School. Looking at the context of the school, religion is very much incorporated in the whole school ethos with local links to the church community and a highly developed RE curriculum rated as outstanding. It is common for the pupils to talk about religion on a day-to-day basis, so it may have influenced their ability to demonstrate more interpretive comments.

These findings led me to begin to explore whether there could be a match between the levels of competence demonstrated in the Intervention and the hierarchy of abilities. I suggest there is an overlap between some of the competences outlined by Byram and

those outlined in Bloom’s Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956). There may also be age or ability related dimensions to the development of ICC which led me to explore further the cognitive development theories of Bloom and Anderson. In applying the early stages of their models with Byram’s competences I began to see a pattern.

<b>Bloom’s Taxonomy</b>	<b>Revised Anderson Taxonomy</b>	<b>ICC Hierarchy</b>
<b>1 Knowledge:</b> Remembering or retrieving previously learned material.	<b>1. Remembering:</b> Recognizing or recalling knowledge from memory.	<b>Explain</b>
<b>2. Comprehension:</b> The ability to grasp or construct meaning from material.	<b>2. Understanding:</b> Constructing meaning from different types of functions.	<b>Relate</b>
<b>3. Application:</b> The ability to use learned material, or to implement material in new and concrete situations.	<b>3. Applying:</b> Carrying out or using a procedure through executing or implementing.	<b>Interpret</b> Critical Cultural Awareness

Table 17– Comparison between Bloom’s and Anderson’s Taxonomies, and ICC

Bloom suggested remembering or recalling events could be placed at the first level of cognitive thinking; I found pupils demonstrated these types of remarks as they explained the events of the day. The second level in Bloom’s taxonomy suggested pupils were developing an understanding and constructing meaning from what they had experienced; this could be mapped on to the skills of relating. It is higher order because it requires more than a recall of events, it requires drawing on previous learning to come to a fuller understanding. The third level in Bloom’s taxonomy suggested that an application of this new knowledge in a new context which developed fresh insights and new understanding; this I have mapped onto the skills of interpretations and critical cultural awareness.

These competences require a change in the way pupils encounter the experience either through a shift in prejudiced ideas, a new insight about the material being covered or a critical comparison of what was previously understood and what is now understood. Bloom goes on to describe levels of analysis, synthesis and evaluation but these I felt were not relevant to the pupils' responses at the primary school level.

**Areas to explore further:**

This observation could be developed by exploring the impact of the Story Tent Intervention with older pupils, and the possible impact of a pupil's literacy level on the distribution of displayed ICC. Such a framework could assist in extracting a metric for ICC that could be applied at earlier developmental stages by accounting for cognitive developmental variances. Whilst some work has been undertaken by King and Baxter (King and Baxter, 2005) to develop a three-part metric of competence, it would be interesting to extend this concept into the primary school setting.

**8.2.2 There is an Interactional Hierarchy within the ICC, Relating to Attitudes**

In the process of exploring the developmental and hierarchical nature of the different competences, I noticed that some factors appeared to be linked, and that others appeared to be indicators of the overall number of competences demonstrated across the pupils' AIE. In other words, the exhibition of certain ICC seemed to guarantee the exhibition of others, suggesting a hierarchical relationship.

The findings from the pupil self-assessment suggested that those pupils who recorded high levels of curiosity also recorded high levels of discovery. Looking at the AIE interview responses there are similar findings. Those pupils who had demonstrated strong attitudes of curiosity were more able to demonstrate the ability to talk about their discoveries in the AIE interview, particularly those coded as technical information. Alice,



George and Zainab all made many comments in their AIE interview that indicated high levels of curiosity and significant numbers of discoveries. Those who demonstrated negative curiosity, Helen and Aamir were more likely to have lower overall scores in the AIE and were more likely to have made factual errors in reporting their discoveries. Whilst this may be an emerging pattern, it should be noted that curiosity was not sufficient to ensure accurate discoveries; both Paul and Harvey were very curious and yet made factual errors in reporting what they had learned.

The impact of curiosity on the pupils' level of discoveries highlighted the importance of presenting the teaching in a way that raised pupils' expectation of an interesting learning experience. For those pupils exhibiting low curiosity, it would be appropriate to provide support to facilitate continued engagement and learning. This happens regularly in good quality lessons in primary classrooms, but it should be noted that there is evidence in this research that highlights the importance of curiosity in developing discovery.

Those pupils who were able to demonstrate critical cultural awareness were also those who could tolerate ambiguity and had a strong sense of personal identity. Lucy, Joy, Tom and Zainab all demonstrated critical cultural awareness and each held a different faith position. Having a secure knowledge of their personal values and beliefs together with the ability to tolerate ambiguity enabled them to view other perspectives and learn from those who held different values and beliefs.

Whilst all the pupils who took part in the interviews had some insights into the concept of religious identity, those who talked more about their own beliefs and could suspend judgement were able to demonstrate a criticality as described by Ford who imagined that the encounter of SR should facilitate critical engagement with those who hold different opinions as outlined in Chapter 2. This finding indicates that primary pupils can exercise

this competence and that the Intervention was providing a place where critical cultural awareness could be expressed.

**Areas to explore further:**

It would be interesting to develop a third iteration of the Story Tent to use in schools that would explore the possibility of teaching pupils to tolerate ambiguity. The Council of Europe have indicated the importance of providing teaching programmes to help pupils develop ICC: this ability to suspend judgement and tolerate ambiguity would appear to be a significant component competence in the development of overall ICC. This merits further investigation.

**8.2.3 Strong Religious Identity Correlates with both Low and High ICC**

This is a tentative proposal, given the limited sample size, but it appeared that pupils with a strong personal sense of religious identity had a tendency to be either particularly successful or unsuccessful in demonstrating ICC.

Religious identity had an impact on how pupils engaged with the Intervention and the levels of ICC they demonstrated. During the AIE interviews particularly it became apparent that pupils' personal religious identity had an impact on levels of openness and curiosity, the types of discoveries they made and how they interpreted and related their experiences. They had brought with them to the learning encounter a vast repertoire of religious and cultural experiences which had not been "bracketed out" as traditionally required in a phenomenological approach to religious education. The style of encounter which the children experienced during the Story Tent Intervention was based on a hermeneutical phenomenology, adopted by Ricoeur (1992) and described by Flood (2006) as the underpinning approach which SR embraced. In Chapter 2 we encountered

Ricoeur who argued that it was positive and helpful to bring past experiences to the learning encounter, and that it is, in fact, impossible to do otherwise.

Whilst the sample size is small there is some indication to suggest that the possession of a faith position (even a rationalist, atheist viewpoint) correlated with the most ICC.

Those pupils who did not align themselves with a faith position, whilst competent at communicating across difference, did not demonstrate the highest levels of competence.

Those pupils most competent and least competent became polarized around the issue of religious identity. This observation is interesting in that one criticism often levied at schools with a religious make up is that strong religious affiliation can lead to intolerance.

This research indicates that strong personal religious identity *if demonstrated with an open attitude and the ability suspend judgement* enhanced the encounter with people from other faith traditions. However, strong religious identity and an unwillingness to be open to other world views inhibited communication competence.

The programme invited pupils to explicitly engage with issues of faith and belief and whilst this had many benefits it was a particular issue in the Middlecity Academy school due to sensitivities raised by a relatively-recent and nationally-notorious controversy regarding perceptions of religiously-motivated manipulation of Muslim school management and curricula. This has frequently been reported in the media as the “Trojan Horse” controversy. Whilst not directly involved in any extremist allegations, the school had become particularly sensitive to the way Islam was presented, and this had implications in the delivery of the Story Tent. With 70% of the pupils coming from a Muslim background, the research team noted differences in the way the pupils at Middlecity Academy responded. The sensitive nature of presenting Islam at the school in appropriate ways was discussed in detail with the RE specialist in preliminary meetings before the Intervention was delivered.

Whilst not measurable in any tangible way it was observed that there was an intensity of engagement during the introduction MFR2 gave of the Quran. She first introduced factual information about the book, but it was when she demonstrated part of the Quran that had been hand-written by her father and given as a gift that there was a connection and intensity of interest that went beyond what is normally experienced in a classroom setting. This highlighted the value of the programme in supporting Muslim pupils. By providing access to members of their own faith community in a school environment they were able to process their own understanding of faith with the support of these representatives. Whilst this was not an explicit objective of the Intervention there does appear to be value in linking the wider faith community to these learning opportunities within the school curriculum.

**Areas to explore further:**

It would be interesting to explore further the impact religious identity had on levels of ICC, and in particular those circumstances under which faith identity assists or hinders ICC. It would also be interesting to explore whether there are Interreligious Competences that are different to ICC described by Byram.

**8.2.4 The Story Tent Intervention Provided a Meaningful Encounter for the Research Team as well as the Pupils**

The comments from the AR team during the Intervention indicate that they themselves were personally learning from the Intervention at an adult level in a similar way to the pupils. There were comments from SFR1 and ST1 in Chapter 7 which indicated a developing understanding of other faith traditions alongside deepening insights into their own beliefs. Comments from ST2 and ST3 demonstrated an increased awareness of the importance of respecting difference and comments from CFR3 and MFR1 suggested they had developed a deeper willingness to engage with those from other faith traditions.

These observations indicate that as researchers taking part in the Story Tent Intervention they were themselves experiencing the benefits of being SR participants.

The aim of the Intervention was to explore whether ICC could be developed through the process of participating in interfaith dialogue around sacred texts. From the comments made by the adults it appears that they too had been exercising similar examples of ICC. These were particularly noticeable in the areas of identity formation, tolerating ambiguity and discovery.

As facilitators of the groups they had been chosen to model respectful attitudes and were selected as they were already competent communicators. Their function was not to learn themselves but rather facilitate and observe which competences the pupils were exercising and what new learning had taken place. However, during the times of questioning the research team found themselves modelling the ability to tolerate ambiguity as there were some questions which they could not answer. They found themselves challenged to explore further their own understanding of faith not only through the process of presenting their faith story but through the encounters they had with fellow believers who had different interpretations of the texts and they found themselves making new discoveries through the dialogue they encountered with the pupils. It would have added greater insight into the experiences of the research team if they had completed the AIE interview at the end of each of the Interventions.

According to Somekh (2006) AR methodology promotes a style of engagement which facilitates powerful learning through a community of practice. The comments discussed in Chapter 7 illustrate that a collaborative community was developed very quickly over the course of the day in which mutual learning was taking place.

**Areas to explore further:**

In future iterations it would be an interesting to conduct AIE interviews with the research team to explore the impact that the Intervention has on developing ICC among the adults. The research team recognised the impact of the Story amongst themselves and highlighted the possibility of extending its use outside the classroom and within the community.

### **8.3 Summary of Findings**

In this Chapter I have presented the primary and secondary findings that came out of the research investigation with reflections on possible ways of developing the work further. The primary findings suggest that story was an age appropriate genre for primary pupils to connect which enabled pupils to investigate difference through an experiential encounter of sacred texts with the support of a community faith representative. The concept of the Story Tent “meeting” place facilitated an environment which enabled pupils to explore a “third space” space of translation in which different viewpoints could be held in tension and explored together. It also recognized that drama proved a particularly effective environment for pupils to exercise Intercultural Communicative Competence.

The secondary findings indicate that some of the competences were more frequently demonstrated than others suggesting the possibility of a hierarchy of competences. These differences were most noticeable in those skills that required cognitive thinking and those which facilitated interactional learning. In Byram’s model there is no differentiation between the conceptual differences of the different competences, my findings suggest otherwise for pupils in KS2. Personal religious identity also impacted the pupils’ responses to the Intervention which tended to have a polarizing impact. The Story Tent Intervention also proved to be a significant learning experience for the Action Research team. The process of presenting and participating in the Intervention provided a space in

which a community of learning developed where all those taking part were being challenged by the experience.

## 9 CONCLUSIONS

In this concluding section I present an overview of some of the strengths and limitations of the research methodology and suggest a selection of recommendations to move the work forward. These recommendations explore opportunities to develop the story tent Intervention and also highlight potential areas for future research.

### 9.1 Strengths and Limitations of the Research.

AR methodology proved to be an effective style of research for exploring ICC. The development of these competences has been widely recognised as a cyclical process and the iterative nature of AR methodology enabled epistemological internal consistency within the research. Whilst it is difficult to draw conclusive evidence from the Intervention as the data sample size was small, the breadth of religious and demographic composition of the research schools provided an opportunity to explore responses to the Intervention over significantly different groups of pupils which provided an interesting comparison.

During the project I became aware of the limited opportunities the team had to fully explore the contributions of the teachers beyond the Story Tent Intervention day. Whilst the faith representatives were able to see how the Intervention worked out in different contexts over the two iterations, the teachers only encountered the experience in their own school contexts. This led to different roles emerging within the research team in which the faith representatives became more involved with the development of the Intervention, as those who were primarily concerned with its delivery, and the teachers took on a more advisory role in assessing how the pupils had responded to the encounter. I would have liked to have had more opportunity to build on the expertise of the teachers, but with the limits of time and many demands on teachers this was not



possible. I would also have liked to have more time equipping the faith representatives with a framework to support them in applying appropriate boundaries in how to talk with the pupils about matters of faith.

The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters proved to be a very effective tool which provided a “third space” context for pupils to process their understanding of the Story Tent encounter. It also provided a measure which could be used to compare pupil responses. Comparing the total scores of competences demonstrated in the AIE interview there was a median score of around 30 comments across the pupils who took part, indicating a consistency in how the pupils were engaging with the interview. It also provided differentiated responses between those pupils who were particularly competent or those who were less competent.

Whilst the AIE interview provided a useful tool for comparison, I was aware of some limitations within the framework. Some competences were more difficult to observe, for example very few pupils demonstrated non-verbal communication, which is by its very nature not communicated verbally. It would be interesting to video pupils’ interactions to explore this dimension further; however, there would be considerable ethical implications to this course of action. Pupils also demonstrated competences that were significant in becoming proficient at communicating which were not included in the framework. For example, an ability to collaborate and work together made a huge difference to pupils’ experience of the encounter and yet it is not recorded within the brief of these findings.

This research drew on well-tested and established work within the sphere of ICC. I drew heavily on the work of Byram and the Council of Europe to build a framework within which to examine pupils’ responses the Story Tent Intervention. However, during the course of the research a new framework has emerged from the Council of Europe that

suggests a model of twenty competences within four broad categories. Whilst there is considerable overlap with previous models, there are significant differences in the framework I applied, in particular a section that incorporates “Values” for developing ICC. I chose not to change my research design midway and would further argue that Byram’s model and the AIE interview are still relevant. Any future work carried out would need to draw on the more recent developments coming out of the Council of Europe.

## **9.2 Recommendations**

In Chapter 8 I have suggested areas which could be explored further as part of each research finding. This section provides a summary of possible ways forward to develop the work established in this thesis within the school setting and research context.

### **9.2.1 Opportunities for Future Story Tent Interventions**

- The stories selected in this research so far have presented difference in a non-controversial way. It would be interesting to explore a faith story which had irreducible differences at its heart where the ability to tolerate ambiguity would be more challenging.
- The research suggests that story is a natural place for pupils to interpret hidden meaning and yet this was not frequently observed during the Interviews. It would be interesting to explore whether a more intentional teaching approach would enable pupils to demonstrate more examples of interpretations of the stories encountered.
- The research suggests that the drama session provided a context for pupils to exercise ICC. It would be interesting to video these sessions to develop a greater awareness of how these competences are being demonstrated.

- The findings from this research suggest that pupils can learn together from religions beyond the three original Abrahamic traditions. There is the possibility to develop future teaching materials around different faith stories and across different faith traditions.
- There is the possibility for developing support material and guidelines to equip future participants from of local faith communities to engage in confidence with the content of the Story Tent Intervention.

### **9.2.2 Opportunities for Future Research**

- An investigation into the impact of using drama as a pedagogic style of learning which is able to develop SR and/or ICC. This research has suggested there is significant evidence to demonstrate that the pupils were exhibiting a range of competences during the drama activity. It would be interesting to explore what factors are involved in making effective use of this style of learning.
- An investigation into how pupils interact in the “third space” point of translation. The literature surrounding interreligious dialogue suggests that there could be a “translation” of religion which is not an exact representation of the meaning. This presents the opportunity to compare the process of language translation with the process of religious translation. Could there be a model which would present Interreligious Communicative Competence which might be different to Intercultural Communicative Competence?
- An investigation into the cognitive and developmental aspects of ICC. It would be interesting to explore whether there is a hierarchy of difficulty in achieving the different competences. This could form the basis of a developmental metric which could help assess pupils’ development.

- An investigation into the possibility of developing the Story Tent structure into a format which could be used beyond the classroom within community groups to enhance and develop community cohesion. The findings from this research have indicated that both pupils and researchers were learning through the Story Tent encounters. It would be interesting to explore whether this format could be applied outside the classroom, within community settings.

## 10 REFERENCES

- Alam, M. Y. and Husband, C. (2006) *British-Pakistani Men from Bradford*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Allport, G. W. (1954) *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge, Mass: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.
- Argyle, M. (1983) *The Psychology of Interpersonal Behaviour*. 4th edition. Hammondsworth: Penguin.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981) *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Barrett, M. D. (2007) *Children's knowledge, beliefs and feelings about nations and national groups*. Hove: Psychology Press.
- Bartlett, F. C. (1932) *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bernard, H.R. (2011) *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantity approaches*. 5th edition. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Bible Society (2014) *YouGov.study for Bible Society - Sacred Texts in Schools* [Accessed: November 2014].
- Bloom, B. (1956) *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. London: Longmans.
- Bourdieu, P. (1992) *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Brewer, M. B. (1984) Beyond the contact hypothesis: Theoretical perspectives on desegregation, in Miller, N. & Brewer, M (eds) *Groups in contact: The psychology of desegregation*. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
- Brewer, M. (1996) 'When contact is not enough - Social Identity and Intergroup Cooperation', *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 20(3/4), pp. 291 - 303.
- Brewer, M. B. (2003) *Intergroup relations*. 2nd edition. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- British Council <https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources> [Accessed: 2nd November 2017].
- Bruner, J. S. (1990) *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Buber, M. (1937) *I and Thou*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.
- Burbules, N. C. (1993) *Dialogue in teaching: theory and practice*. New York; London: Teachers College Press.
- Byram, M. (1997) *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- Byram, M. (2008) *From foreign language education to education for intercultural citizenship: essays and reflections*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Cairns, E., & Hewstone, M, (2002) The impact of peacemaking in Northern Ireland on intergroup behaviour, in G. Salomon & B. Nevo (eds.) *The nature and study of peace education*, (pp.217–228). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Cantle, T. (2001) *Community Cohesion: A Report of the independent Review Team*. London: Home Office. Cantle, T. (2005) *Community cohesion: A new framework for race and diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cantle, T. (2012) *Interculturalism: the new era of cohesion and diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- CIP (2016) *Scriptural Reasoning Overview*. Available at: <https://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/sr> [Accessed: April 2016].
- CIP (2017) *What is Scriptural Reasoning?* Available at: <http://www.scripturalreasoning.org/what-isscriptural-reasoning.html> [Accessed: February 2017].
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cooling, T. (1994) *Concept Cracking: exploring Christian beliefs in school*. Nottingham: The Stapleford Centre.
- Copley, T. (1998) *Echo of angels: the first report of the Biblos Project*. Exeter: Biblos Project, School of Education, University of Exeter.
- Copley, T., Lane, S., Savini, H. and Walshe, K. (2001) *Where Angels Fear to Tread: The Second Report of the Biblos Project*. Exeter: School of Education, University of Exeter.
- Copley, T., Freathy, R., Lane, S. and Walshe, K. (2004) *On the Side of Angels: The Third Report of the Biblos Project*. Exeter: School of Education, University of Exeter.
- Copley, T. (2005) 'Young People, Biblical Narrative and “Theologizing”: A UK Perspective', *Religious Education*, 100(3), pp. 254-265.
- Council of Europe (2008) *White paper on intercultural dialogue: Living together as equals with dignity*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
- Council of Europe (2009) *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*. Available at: [https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/autobiography/Source/AIE\\_en/AIE\\_context\\_concepts\\_and\\_theories\\_en.pdf](https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/autobiography/Source/AIE_en/AIE_context_concepts_and_theories_en.pdf) [Accessed: March 2014].
- Council of Europe (2014) *Developing intercultural competence through education. Pestalozzi Series No.3* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Council of Europe (2016) *Competences for Democratic Culture - Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies.*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

- Cowie, L. and Henry, M. (2007) *The Linking Network*. Available at: <http://thelinkingnetwork.org.uk/> [Accessed: 08/01/2018].
- Cresswell, J.(2013) *Qualitative inquiry and research design : Choosing among five approaches*. 3rd edition. Los Angeles: Sage Publications
- Curtain, H. and Pesola, C. A. (1994) *Languages and Children: Making the Match*. New York: Longman.
- Dai, X. and Chen, G. M. (2014) *Intercultural communication competence: conceptualization and its development in cultural contexts and interactions* E-Book: Cambridge Scholars Publishing
- DCSF (2007) *Guidance on the duty to promote community cohesion*. Nottingham: DCSF.
- DCSF (2010) *Religious Education in English Schools: Non-Statutory guidance 2010*. Nottingham: DCSF.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2006) 'Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization', *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10(3), pp. 241-266,.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2009) *The SAGE handbook of intercultural competence*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Denham, J. (2001) *Building Cohesive Communities: A Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion*. London: Home Office.
- DfE (2014) Promoting Fundamental British Values  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-smsc>  
[Accessed: 2nd November 2017].
- Donaldson, M. (1978) *Children's minds*. London: Fontana.
- Elliott, J. (1983) 'A curriculum for the study of human affairs: the contribution of Lawrence Stenhouse.', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 15(2), pp. 105-23.
- Elliott, J. (1991) *Action Research for Educational Change*. Buckinghamshire: Open University Press.
- European Commission (2009) *The INCA project: Intercultural Competence Assessment*. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/the-inca-project-interculturalcompetence-assessment> [Accessed: Nov 2017].
- Feast (2014) *Guidelines for Dialogue*. Available at: <https://thefeast.org.uk/resources/guidelines-fordialogue/> [Accessed: March 2014].
- Flood, G. (1999) *Beyond phenomenology: rethinking the study of religion*. London: Cassell.
- Flood, G. (2006) 'The Phenomenology of Scripture: Patterns of Reception and Discovery Behind Scriptural Reasoning', in Ford, D. & Pecknold, C.C. (eds.) *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

- Ford, D. (2006) 'An Interfaith Wisdom: Scriptural Reasoning between Jews, Christians and Muslims', in Ford, D. & Pecknold, C.C. (eds.) *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Ford, D. (2012) *Flamenco, Tai Chi and Six-Text Scriptural Reasoning: Report on a Visit to China*. Available at: <https://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/resources/lecturespapersandspeeches/chinavisit> [Accessed: March 2018].
- Ford, D. (2013) 'Scriptural Reasoning and the Legacy of Vatican II: Their Mutual Engagement and Significance', *Modern Theology*, 29(4), pp. 93 - 119.
- Francis, L. (1978) 'Measurement Reapplied: Research into the Child's Attitude Towards Religion', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 1(2), pp. 45-51.
- Francis, L. J. (2000) Research in religious education and church school studies: part one, in: *Religion in Education: 3*. Gracewing: Leominster.
- Francourt, N. (2009) 'Reflexive Assessment. The Interpretative Approach and Classroom Assessment', in Ipgrave, J., Jackson, R. & O'Grady, K. (eds.) *Religious Education Research through a Community of Practice: Action Research and the Interpretive Approach*. Munster, Germany: Waxmann, pp. 84-99.
- Freathy, R. and Aylward, K. (2010) 'Everything is in parables: An exploration of students' difficulties in understanding Christian beliefs concerning Jesus.', *Religious Education*, 105, pp. 86–102.
- Gadamer, H. G. (1975) *Truth and Method*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Gaertner, S. L., Mann, J. A., Murrell, A. J., and Dovidio, J. F. (1989) 'Reducing intergroup bias: The benefits of re-categorization', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57, pp. 239-249.
- Gipps, C. V. (1994) *Beyond Testing: Towards a Theory of Educational Assessment*. Falmer P.
- Global Education Congress (2002) *Global Education Declaration - Maastricht*. Available at: [http://gene.eu/wp-content/uploads/Gene\\_EuropeanPolicyFrameworks-TheMaastrichtDeclaration2002.pdf](http://gene.eu/wp-content/uploads/Gene_EuropeanPolicyFrameworks-TheMaastrichtDeclaration2002.pdf) [Accessed: November 2017].
- Goldman, R. (1965) *Readiness for religion: Basis for developmental religious education*. London: Routledge.
- Greggs, T. (2010) *Inter-faith Pedagogy for Muslims and Christians: Scriptural Reasoning and Christian and Muslim Youth Work*. Available at: <https://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/resources/scripturalreasoningresources/interfaithpedagogiformuslimsandchristians> [Accessed: March 2017].
- Grimmitt, M. (2000) *Pedagogies of Religious Education*. Great Wakering, Essex, McCrimmon Publishing Co Ltd.
- Gudykunst, W. B. (1994) *Bridging Differences: Effective Intergroup Communication*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.



- Gumperz, J. H. and Hymes, D. (1972) *Directions in sociolinguistics the ethnography of Communication*. Holt: Rinehart and Winston Inc.
- Habermas, J. (1987) *The theory of communicative action*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Hartas, D. (2010) *Education Research and Inquiry Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Continuum.
- Heidegger, M. (1949) *Existence and Being*. United States of America: Gateway.
- Heron, J. a. R., P. (1997) 'A participatory inquiry paradigm', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(3), pp. 274-94. Herr, K. and Anderson, G. L. (2005) *The action research dissertation: a guide for students and faculty*. London: SAGE.
- Hewstone, M. and Brown, R. (1986) 'Contact is not enough: An intergroup perspective on the 'contact hypothesis'', *Contact and Conflict in Intergroup Encounters*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, pp. pp 1-44.
- Hunt, R. A. (1972) 'Mythological-symbolic religious commitment: the LAM Scales', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 11, pp. 42-52.
- Husserl, E. and Farber, M. (1940) *Philosophical essays in memory of Edmund Husserl*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univer. Press.
- Hymes, D. (1972) 'On Communicative Competence', in Pride, J.B. & Holmes, J. (eds.) *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Iprgrave, J. (2001) *Pupil-to-pupil dialogue in the classroom as a tool for religious education*. Coventry: University of Warwick, Institute of Education, Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit.
- Iprgrave, J. (2002) *Inter faith encounter and religious understanding in an inner city primary school*. Coventry: University of Warwick.
- Iprgrave, J., Jackson, R. and O'Grady, K. (2009) *Religious education research through a community of practice: action research and the interpretive approach*. Münster: Waxmann.
- Iprgrave, J. (2012) 'From storybooks to bullet points: books and the Bible in primary and secondary religious education', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 35(3), pp. 264-281.
- Iprgrave, J. (2015) 'Interfaith dialogue in the classroom', in Elton-Chalcraft, S. (ed.) *Teaching Religious Education Creatively*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 123-138.
- Jackson, R. (1997) *Religious education: an interpretive approach*. Oxon: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Jackson, R. (2004) *Rethinking religious education and plurality: issues in diversity and pedagogy*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Jackson, R. (2014) *Signposts- Policy and practice for teaching about religions and non-religious world views in intercultural education*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- JSR (2014) *Volume 13, No. 1; Phenomenology-and-Scripture* <http://jsr.shanti.virginia.edu/> [Accessed: March 2017].

- Kaye, M. (2010) *Scriptural Reasoning with Israelis and Palestinians* <http://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/resources/scripturalreasoningresources/srwithisraelisandpalestinians> [Accessed: March 2015].
- Kearney, R. (2004) *On Paul Ricoeur : the Owl of Minerva*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Keast, J and (ed) 2007. *Religious diversity and intercultural education: a reference book for schools*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
- Kemmis, S. and McTaggart (2000) *Participatory Action Research - Handbook of qualitative research* Second edition. California: Sage Publications Inc.
- King, P. M. and Baxter, M., (2005) 'A developmental model of intercultural maturity', *Journal of College Student Development*, 46, pp. 571-595.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984) *Experiential learning: experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs ; London: Prentice-Hall.
- Koshul, B. (2006) 'Scriptural Reasoning and the Philosophy of Social Science', in Ford, D. & Pecknold, C.C. (eds.) *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*. Oxford: Blackwells.
- Koshul, B. and Kepnes, S. (2007) '*Scripture, Reason, and the Contemporary Islam-West Encounter*', [Online]. Version. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230605626>. [Accessed: March 2014]
- Lewin, K. (1948) 'Action Research and Minority Problems', *Journal Issues*, 2(4), pp. 34-46.
- Loman, S. E. and Francis, L. (2006) 'The Loman index of biblical interpretation: distinguishing between literal, symbolic and rejecting modes among 11 to 14 year olds.', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 28(2), pp. 131–34.
- Loukes, H. (1961) *Teenage religion: an enquiry into attitudes and possibilities among British boys and girls in secondary modern schools*. London: HSM Press.
- Lundgren, U. (1996) *A history of CultNet (1996-1999)*. Available at: <https://cultnetworld.wordpress.com/about-us/cultnet-history/> [Accessed: 3rd November 2017].
- Mayer, F. W. (2014) *Narrative Politics: Stories and Collective Action*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McCowan, T. (2017) 'Building bridges rather than walls: research into an experiential model of interfaith education in secondary schools', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 39(3), pp. 269-278.
- McKernan, J. (1996) *Curriculum action research: a handbook of methods and resources for the reflective practitioner*. 2nd edition. London: Kogan Page.
- McNiff, J. (2013) *Action research: principles and practice*. 3rd edition. Abingdon: Routledge.
- McNiff, J. (2014) *Writing and Doing Action Research*. London: SAGE.

- Miller, J. (2009) 'Raising Humanities Teachers' Understanding of their Pupils' Religious and Cultural Backgrounds', in Ipgrave, J., Jackson, R. & O'Grady, K. (eds.) *Religious Education Research through a Community of Practice: Action Research and the Interpretive Approach*. Munster, Germany: Waxmann, pp. 130 - 147.
- Miller, J. (2012) 'Community Cohesion: Where now for RE?', *REsource*, 34(2), pp. 4-7.
- Moseley, A. (2011) *Link Schools' Projects - Do they build up positive relationships amongst children across different faiths and cultures?* Unpublished MA thesis (Coventry, University of Warwick): Institute of Education.
- Moseley, A. (2017a) 'The 'Story Tent': Scriptural Reasoning in RE', *REtoday*, 34(2), pp. 26-27.
- Moseley, A. (2017b) *The "Story Tent" – Scriptural Reasoning principles applied to primary school pupils. (The Cambridge Interfaith Programme website)*. Available at: <https://www.interfaith.cam.ac.uk/news/storytent> [Accessed: May 2018].
- Moyaert, M. (2011) *Fragile identities: towards a theology of interreligious hospitality*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Moyaert, M. (2017) 'Interreligious literacy and scriptural reasoning: Some hermeneutical, anthropological, pedagogical, and experiential reflections', in Pugliese, M.A. & Hwang, A.Y. (eds.) *Teaching Interreligious Encounters*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- NATRE (2017) *The Shared Space Project*. Available at: <https://www.natre.org.uk/aboutnatre/projects/the-shared-space-project/> [Accessed: May 2018].
- Nwosu, P. O. (2009) *Understanding Africans' conceptualizations of Intercultural Identity*, In *Deardorff p158 - 178. The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence* California: Sage.
- O'Grady, K. (2003) 'Motivation in religious education: a collaborative investigation with year eight students', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 25(3), pp. 214-25.
- Ochs, P. (1998) *Peirce, pragmatism, and the logic of scripture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ochs, P. (2006) 'Philosophical Warrants for Scriptural Reasoning', in Ford, D. & Pecknold, C.C. (eds.) *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*. Oxford: Blackwells.
- Ochs, P. (2013) 'Re-socializing Scholars of Religious, Theological, and Theo-Philosophical Inquiry.', *Modern Theology*, 29(4), pp. 201-219.
- Ofsted (2013) *Religious education: Realising the potential*, GOV.UK.
- Ouseley, H. (2001) *Community Pride – not Prejudice: Making Diversity Work in Bradford*. Bradford: Bradford Vision.
- P4C (2018) *Benefits of Philosophy for Children*. Available at: <https://p4c.com/about-p4c/benefits-of-p4c/> [Accessed: January 2018].
- Peatling, J. H. (1974) 'Cognitive development in pupils in grades four through twelve: the incidence of concrete and abstract religious thinking,' *Character Potential*, 7, pp. 52–61.

- Peirce, C. S., Hartshorne, C., Weiss, P. and Burks, A. W. (1931) *Collected papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Peirce, C. S., Houser, N. and Kloesel, C. J. W. (1992) *The essential Peirce : selected philosophical writings. Vol.1, (1867-1893)*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Pfohl, S. J. (1985) *Images of deviance and social control: a sociological history*. New York; London: McGraw-Hill.
- Piaget, J. (1954) *The construction of reality in the child*. London: Routledge.
- Poyatos, F. (1992) 'Non-verbal communication in foreign language teaching: Theoretical and methodological perspectives', in Helbo, A. (ed.) *Evaluation and Language Teaching*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- QCA (2004) *Religious Education: The Non-Statutory National Framework* London: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.
- Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (2008) *The Sage Handbook of Action Research*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.
- Reed, E. D., Freathy, R., Cornwall, S. and Davis, A. (2013) 'Narrative theology in Religious Education', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 35(3), pp. 297-312.
- Religious Education Council (2013) *A Review of Religious Education in England*, Religious Education Council. Available at: <https://www.religiouseducationcouncil.org.uk/resources/documents/a-review-of-religious-education-in-england/> [Accessed: May 2018].
- Ricoeur, P. (1986) *Lectures on ideology and Utopia*. New York; Guildford: Columbia University Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1992) *Oneself as Another*. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (2004) *Memory, History, Forgetting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (2006) *On Translation*. New York: Routledge.
- Saldana, J. a. (2016) *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Second Edition edn.
- Smart, N. (1978) *The phenomenon of religion*. London: Mowbrays.
- Smith, D. L. (1998) 'That burning bush again: the psychometric assessment of stages in religious thinking', *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 19, pp. 71-82.
- Somekh, B. (2006) *Action research: a methodology for change and development*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Stenhouse, L. (1975) *An introduction to curriculum research and development*. London: Heinemann Educational.
- Stenhouse, L., Rudduck, J. and Hopkins, D. (1985) *Research as a basis for teaching: Readings from the work of Lawrence Stenhouse*. London: Heinemann Educational.

- Swann, M. (1985) *Education for All: A Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups*, London HMSO.
- Tajfel, H. (1978) *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations*. London: Academic Press.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (1999) *Communicating across cultures*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (2005) *Understanding intercultural communication*. 2nd edn. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (2015) 'Identity negotiation theory', in Bennett, J. (ed.) *Sage Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Tompensaars, F. and Wooliams, P. (2005) 'Research Application: Toward a General Framework of Competence for Today's Global Village', in Deardorff, D.K. (ed.) *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competences*. California: Sage, pp. 438-454.
- UNESCO (2018) *Intercultural Learning*. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/networks/global-networks/aspnet/studyareas/intercultural-learning/> [Accessed: April 2018].
- Vaughan, M. E. (2015) 'Educational Definitions for Scriptural Reasoning: Learning, Understanding, and Dialogue', *Journal of Scriptural Reasoning*, 14(2).
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978) *Mind in society: the development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Watson, B. (1987) *Education and Belief* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Watson, B. (1993) *The effective teaching of religious education*. London: Longman.
- Wegerif, R. (2012) *Dialogic: Education for the Internet age*. London: Routledge.
- Winter, R. (1987). *Action-Research and the Nature of Social Inquiry: Professional Innovation and Educational Work*. Aldershot: Gower Publishing Company.
- Zaharna, R. S. (2009) 'An Associative Approach to Intercultural Competence in the Arab World', in Deardorff, D.K. (ed.) *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. California: Sage, pp. 179 - 195.

## APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT PLANNING

### Assessment Planning Sheet – Action Research October 2015 (From “The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competencies” Chapter 28, Deardorff, 2009)

Mission: An inquiry into the development of intercultural competencies in primary schools through the application of Scriptural Reasoning principles.					
Goal:	Objectives:	Assessment tool/method and what it measures:	Planned use of data from tool/method:	Time line:	Responsibility for implementation:
To assess initial base line of ICC of pupils.	To gain an overview of pupils ICC before the intervention.	1) Document analysis of global-citizenship work and class records	Overview of whole class level of engagement with ICC and global citizenship.	Week before intervention.	Class teacher
		2) Initial questionnaire to assess ICC attitudes.	Baseline assessment to compare at the end of iteration 1 and 2.	Week before intervention.	Class teacher.
To assess the ongoing impact of intervention.	To gain an insight in to pupil perception throughout the intervention.	1) Pupil questionnaire using scaled questions to self-assess changes of attitudes and skills at three points during the day. (Radar charts / Excel)	To compare the impact of different sessions on pupil's perceptions and to explore how they change over the day.	During intervention.	WRERU Researcher. Pupils.
		2) Teacher notebooks to record observed ICC seen during the session. Five minute adult group reflection at the end of each session. (Comments to be recorded and transcribed later)	Triangulate observations of teachers with pupil's perceptions.	During intervention and afterwards	Class teacher, faith representatives, and Researcher.
		3) One focus group – session three to be recorded to analyse and identify exhibited ICC skills and attitudes.	Comments will be used to identify specific examples of ICC skills and attitudes to triangulate with teachers and pupils observations.	During session three	WRERU Researcher Pupils
To reflect on the impact of the intervention.	To compare levels of ICC at the end of the intervention with those observed at initial assessments.	1) Pupil questionnaire at the end of intervention to assess changes in ICC attitudes.	To be measured against the baseline assessment to see any changes in levels of ICC attitudes.	End of intervention.	WRERU Researcher. Pupils.
		2) Teacher interview at the end of intervention to review observed levels of ICC.	To be used as evaluative measure and part of the action research response to improving the next iteration of intervention.	End of intervention.	WRERU Researcher Class teacher.
		3) AIE Pupil interviews to explore ICC development. (Focus group to be interviewed individually after the intervention has been completed)	To be used to gather practical examples of ICC skills and attitudes and an evaluative measure of the action research.	After the intervention.	WRERU Researcher. Pupils.

## APPENDIX B: FIRST INTERVENTION: SAMPLE TEACHING MATERIAL

Title: An inquiry into the development of intercultural competencies in primary schools through the application of Scriptural Reasoning principles.

Warwick University – WRERU

# The Story Tent Intervention



**An Inquiry into the Story of Noah**

Action Research Project  
First Intervention  
October 2015

2015-02-05

1


**Title: An inquiry into the development of intercultural competencies in primary schools through the application of Scriptural Reasoning principles.**

**Learning Episode 1**

Key Question: What makes a story interesting?


Learning Intention	Development of skills	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils can identify what makes a story interesting and engaging.</li> <li>• Pupils practise respect for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To identify story parts</li> <li>• To listen respectfully to others</li> <li>• To collaborate in paired work</li> <li>• Showing curiosity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gazebo</li> <li>• Crown</li> <li>• Torah</li> <li>• Bible</li> <li>• Qur'an</li> <li>• Story texts from each tradition.</li> </ul>

**Outline of Learning Episode:**




Can you tell me a story ? Working in pairs...

- This belongs to a character, can you tell the story?
- What do you need to make a story?
- Repeat activity



What makes a great story ? Working in pairs...

- Aristotle had some ideas: It needs a plot with a setting, some characters a beginning, a problem and resolution and an ending (Poetics)
- working in groups of 3 can you create your own story plots?



101 Introduction to Sacred Texts.

Torah - Jewish representative

Bible - Christian representative

Qur'an - Muslim representative

**Assessment for Learning:**

- Can children identify elements that make a good story?
- All can identify main story elements of setting, character and plot
  - Most can describe how a story is constructed to include setting, character and plot
  - Some can explain what features makes a story interesting




**Title: An inquiry into the development of intercultural competencies in primary schools through the application of Scriptural Reasoning principles.**


**Learning Episode 2**

Key Question: What makes some stories sacred?


Learning Intention	Development of skills	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To learn key religious vocabulary</li> <li>• Retell a story through drama</li> <li>• To show curiosity about the story.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discover key aspects of the story</li> <li>• Relate the story to personal experiences</li> <li>• Empathy towards the storyteller</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three story bags with props for drama.</li> </ul>

**Outline of Learning Episode:**

- 

Pupils welcomed in to the Gazebo or "Mishkan"  
Ground rules explained for safe dialogue.
- 

Class split into three groups to work on one of the texts

  - Faith representative to read through the story with a group
  - Group to work through freeze frame activities
  - Using the prop story bag can the group put together a short drama to communicate the meaning of the story?
- 

Recitation - faith representative to read the story

  - Each group to perform the story from either the right, back or left section of the gazebo, from the outside looking in.
  - This represents three different view points of the texts.

**Assessment for Learning:**

Can pupils discover what the text means to the faith representative?

All pupils will be able to retell a sacred story through drama with respect.

Most pupils will be able to relate what the story is trying to communicate.

Some pupils will be able to explain why the story is sacred or special to people of faith.


**Title: An inquiry into the development of intercultural competencies in primary schools through the application of Scriptural Reasoning principles.**

**Learning Episode 3**


Key Question: What makes the difference?

Learning Intention	Development of skills	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to texts</li> <li>• Recap key vocabulary</li> <li>• Tolerate ambiguity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpret what the stories are communicating</li> <li>• Recognise difference</li> <li>• Recognise similarity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sorting chart and cards.</li> <li>• Table and two chairs</li> <li>• Key phrases to use when discussing different attitudes.</li> </ul>

**Outline of Learning Episode:**




Two adults model good discussion styles emphasising what to do when you find you disagree. Provide key phrases to ask questions and express opinions.



How do these stories relate to each other?

- In groups of 6- 8 (3 faith groups represented as recommended in Scriptural Reasoning) Pupils to discuss similarities and differences in the stories they have told.
- Can you interpret what each story is trying to communicate? What can we learn about faith?



Can you discuss which statement belongs to each story?

- Could it belong to just one story?
- could it belong to more than one of the stories?

**Assessment for Learning:**

Can pupils identify similarities and differences in the text?

All pupils will be able to remember aspects of the stories using key words

Most pupils will be able to compare similarities and differences in the stories

Some pupils will be able to interpret these in the light of their own experiences

**Title: An inquiry into the development of intercultural competencies in primary schools through the application of Scriptural Reasoning principles.**


**Plenary:**

Key Question: What do these stories tell me about life?

Learning Intention	Development of skills	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflect on learning</li><li>• Relate stories to my experiences of life</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relate their learning to experiences.</li><li>• To explain aspects of the day which were significant</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Powerpoint with final questions.</li><li>• Paper and pencils</li></ul>


**Outline of Learning Episode:**

**Relate - Paired work**




- What have you discovered about the Noah story?
- What similarities and differences will you remember?
- Has today changed your attitudes at all?

**Relate - Individual work**



Write down what precious things you want to remember

**Question Time**



Reflect on attitudes at the end of the day?  
Whole class question time.

Assessment for Learning:

Assessment takes the form of an open ended written reflection. Differentiation by outcome.

**“The Story Tent” – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> Oct 2015**



# An Inquiry into the Story of Noah

\* Name (in pencil):

Number:

## Session 1: What makes a good story?

### Attitudes

- |                                      |                        |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) I feel interested and curious    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| (2) I feel respectful                | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| (3) I feel open to learn from others | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |


### Skills

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| (1) I am discovering new ideas or information                | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| (2) I can understand what this story means to another person | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |
| (3) I can relate what I am learning to my own experiences    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |


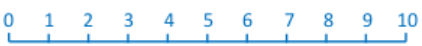

**One thing I want to remember:**

## Session 2: What makes a story sacred?

### Attitudes

- (1) I feel interested and curious 
- (2) I feel respectful 
- (3) I feel open to learn from others 

### Skills

- (1) I am discovering new ideas or information 
- (2) I can understand what this story means to another person 
- (3) I can relate what I am learning to my own experiences 




**One thing I want to remember:**

## Session 3: What is the difference between these stories?

### Attitudes

- (1) I feel curious 
- (2) I feel respectful 
- (3) I feel open to learn from others 

### Skills

- (1) I am discovering new ideas or information 
- (2) I can understand what this story means to another person 
- (3) I can relate what I am learning to my own experiences 

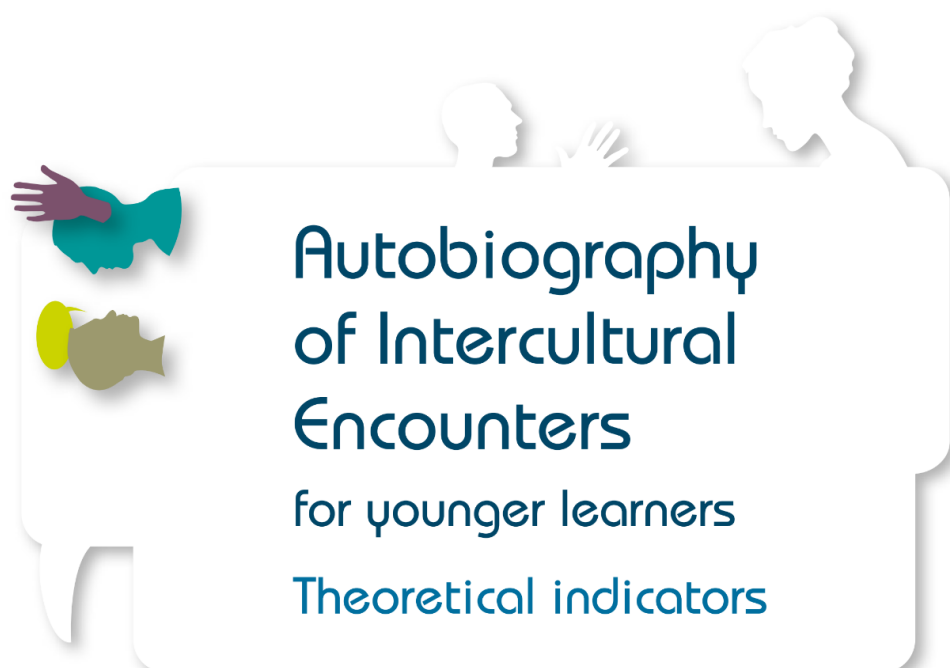
**One thing I want to remember:**

## APPENDIX D: SECOND INTERVENTION: SAMPLE SORTING ACTIVITY

Can you decide which statement would fit with which faith story? Can you explain why?

<p>"With the one word of Akal, the universe was created."</p>	<p>And it is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all swimming in an orbit.</p>	<p>And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light.</p>
<p>Before the Universe was created, for countless ages, there was utter darkness.</p>	<p>God creates what He wills. Indeed, God is powerful over all things.</p>	<p>And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.</p>
<p>Many millions are the skies and solar systems.</p>	<p>And He placed unmovable mountains on the surface of the earth.</p>	<p>Be fruitful, and multiply...</p>
<p>Forever and ever, He is the One, the One Universal Creator.</p>	<p>Indeed, I am going to create a human being from clay.</p>	<p>'Let there be lights in heaven to divide the day from the night.</p>

## APPENDIX E: AIE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OUTLINE



*Can you remember a time when you met someone who was different from yourself in some way? This could be someone from another country, or someone from another place in... [the child's country].*

*Or it could be someone who has a different religion from you, or someone who speaks a different language. Think carefully about the meeting, where you met and what happened.*

*OK, have you thought of a time when you met someone who was different from yourself?*

...

## Display text card: The meeting

### Description of the encounter

*I'm really interested in hearing all about what happened when you met this person / these people. Tell me everything that happened.*

If the child only gives a short answer or gets stuck, encourage her / him by using one or more of the following prompts:

*What else can you tell me?*

*Tell me a little bit more.*

*And then what happened?*

### Location of the encounter

*Where did this happen?*

*What were you doing there?*

## Display text card: The other person

### Description of the other person

[THEORY - acknowledgement of identities, having knowledge about others]

*Can you tell me more about... [the other person / people]? Who were they?*

*What was the first thing you noticed about them?*

*What else did you notice about them?*

*Can you tell me anything else about them?*

*What was her name? / What was his name? / What were their names?*

*What did they look like?*

[THEORY - possible identity marker]

*What clothes were they wearing?*

[THEORY - possible identity marker]

*Were they wearing anything else like jewellery?*

[THEORY - possible identity marker]

If yes: *What sort of things?*

*Have you seen other people like her / him / them before?*

If yes: *Where?*

If yes: *In what ways were they like her / him / them?*





Display text card:  
**Talking to each other**

**Communicative aspects of the encounter**

[THEORY - communicative awareness, knowledge]

**How did they talk to you?**

**Was it easy for you to understand them?**

If yes: **How come?**

If no: **Why not?**

**How did you talk to them?**

**Was it easy for them to understand you?**

If yes: **How come?**

If no: **Why not?**

**Did you have to change the way you usually talk?**

[THEORY - behavioural flexibility]

If yes: **How did you change the way you talk?**

**Did you find any other way, like signing to them with your hands, to help them understand you?**

If yes: **What did you do?**

**Did they do any signing to you with their hands, to help you understand them?**

If yes: **What did they do?**

Display text card:  
**Your feelings**

**The child's own reactions**

[THEORY – respect for otherness]

**What did you think when all this happened?**

Prompt if necessary: **Did you find it strange, or interesting, or what?**

**Why? / What makes you say that?**



**How did you feel at the time?**

Prompt if necessary: *Did you enjoy it, or feel at all upset, or what?*

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

**How did you feel about... [the other person/people]?**

Prompt if necessary: *Did you like them, or not like them, or what?*

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

**Would you like to see... [the other person/people] again?**

If yes: *Why would you like to see them again?*

If no: *Why wouldn't you like to see them again?*

Display text card:

## The other person's feelings

### The child's perceptions of the other person's reactions

[THEORY – respect for otherness, empathy]

**How do you think... [the other person/people] felt at the time?**

Prompt if necessary: *Do you think she/he/they felt happy, or at all upset, or what?*

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

**What do you think they were thinking when all this happened?**

Prompt if necessary: *Do you think they found it strange, or interesting, or what?*

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

**What do you think they felt about you?**

Prompt if necessary: *Do you think they liked you, or didn't like you, or what?*

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

**Do you think they would ever like to see you again?**

**Why? / Why not?**



## Display text card: Same and different

### Comparing perspectives of self and other

[THEORY – respect for otherness, empathy, interpreting and relating,  
tolerance of ambiguity]

[Omit question if answer is obvious from preceding questions] **Do you think that you and... [the other person/people] felt the same way when you met?**

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

[Omit question if answer is obvious from preceding questions] **Do you think that you and... [the other person/people] felt differently about anything when you met?**

**Why? / What makes you say that?**

**Do you think there is anything that you could learn from them?**

If yes: **What sort of things?**

Prompt if necessary: **What about the way they speak, the way they dress, or something else about themselves?**

**Do you think there is anything that they could learn from you?**

If yes: **What sort of things?**

Prompt if necessary: **What about the way you speak, the things you do, or something else about yourself?**

## Display text card: Thinking a bit more

### Reflecting on the experience of the meeting as a whole

[THEORY - critical cultural awareness]

**If you had to tell a friend about your meeting with... [the other person/people], what would you say?**

**What do you think you have learnt or discovered from meeting... [the other person/people]?**

[THEORY - awareness of knowledge discovery]

**If you met them again, and you had to spend an afternoon together, what sort of things do you think you would do together?**

[THEORY - action orientation]

*If you met them again, is there anything that you would like to tell them about yourself?*

[THEORY - action orientation]

*If you met them again, would you do anything different from last time?*

[THEORY - behavioural flexibility, action orientation]

If yes: *What sort of things would you do differently?*

If no: *Why wouldn't you do anything differently?*

*If you met them again, is there anything you would like to ask them?*

[THEORY - knowledge discovery, action orientation]

If yes: *What sort of things would you like to ask them?*

*If you wanted to find out more about them in the meantime, what would you do?*

[THEORY - knowledge discovery, action orientation]

If they say they would ask someone for information: *Who would you ask? What sort of questions would you ask?*

*Do you think meeting... [the other person/people] has changed you in any way?*

If yes: *How has it changed you?*

If no: *Are you sure?*

*Do you think meeting... [the other person/people] has made you do anything which you wouldn't have done if you hadn't met them?*

[THEORY - action orientation]

If yes: *What did it make you do?*

If no: *Are you sure?*

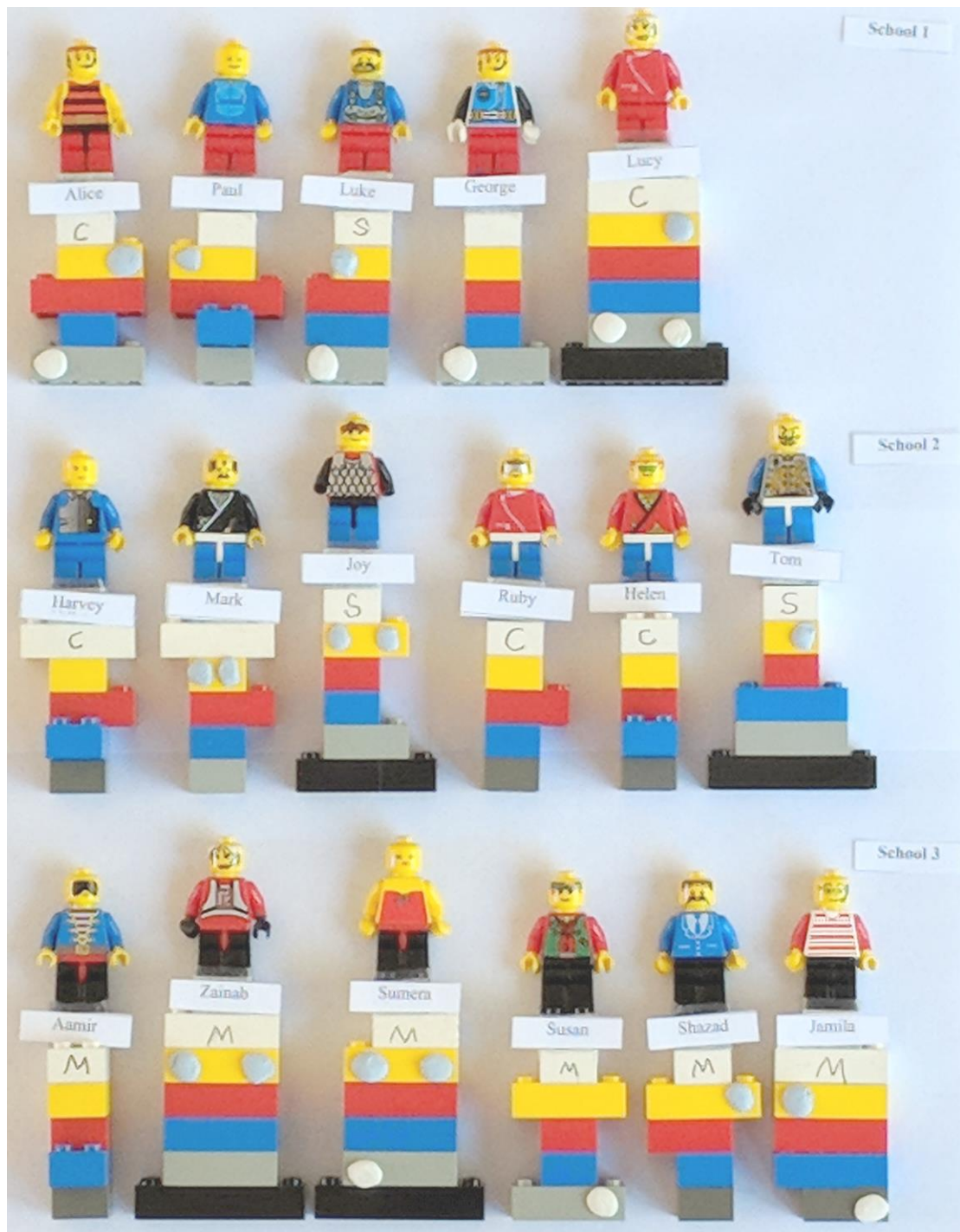
*Do you think you will do anything as a result of you and me having this talk?*

[THEORY - action orientation]

## APPENDIX F: CASE STUDY DATA INFORMATION

Data	Personal Data			Data Collected AR1			Data Collected AR2		
	Y5/6	M/F	Faith	AIE	SA	GW	AIE	SA	GW
<b>School 1</b>									
Alice	6	F	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paul	6	M	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Luke	6	M	S/R	✓	✓	✓	✓	X/✓	✓
George	6	M	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lucy	6	F	C	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
<b>School 2</b>									
Harvey	5	M	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mark	5	M	NA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Joy	5	F	S/R	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Ruby	5	F	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Helen	5	F	C	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X
Tom	5	M	S/R	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓
<b>School 3</b>									
Aamir	5	M	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zainab	5	F	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sumera	5	F	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Susan	5	F	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
Shazad	5	M	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jamila	5	F	M	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## APPENDIX G: LEGO REPRESENTATION OF CASE STUDY PUPILS



## APPENDIX H: AIE TRANSCRIPT CODING

<b>ICC Attitudes</b>	<b>Cd</b>	<b>Keys words:</b>
17. Respect	AR	Listening, respect,
18. Openness	AO	Enjoyed, open, learn more...
19. Curiosity	AC	Interested, curious, excited, asked questions
<b>ICC Relational</b>		
20. Identity awareness – self/ other	IS/O	Mention of religious, geographical or personal aspects of identity.
21. Empathy	EM	Describes how another person felt.
22. Tolerates Ambiguity	TA	Able to accept different opinions
<b>ICC Communicative Awareness</b>		
23. Verbal	CAV	Comments on things said during Intervention
24. Non-verbal	CAN	Comments on nonverbal clues
25. Text based – written word	CAT	Comments on text or reading or language
<b>ICC – Discover and Interact</b> (Finding out new information)		
26. <i>Technical</i> knowledge	DT	Knowing that...( Information)
27. <i>Practical</i> knowledge	DP	Knowing how...( Process of learning)
28. <i>Emancipatory</i> knowledge	DE	New knowing ...( Wow moment!)
<b>ICC – Interpret and Relate</b> (Processing new information)		
29. Explain	SE	Make clear, describe in detail, give a reason
30. Relate	SR	Show a connection between texts or life experiences.
31. Interpret	SI	Explain the meaning, understand particular significance.
32. Critical Cultural Awareness	CCA	Evaluate critically practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

## APPENDIX I: RESEARCH TEAM

<b>Name</b>	<b>Researcher Role</b>	<b>Reference in quote</b>	<b>Specialism</b>	<b>First Intervention</b>	<b>Second Intervention</b>
Anne	Researcher	RS	CIP / PhD	X	X
Nadina	Muslim	MFR1	CIP	X	X
Ashia	Muslim	MFR2	PhD	X	X
Lenny	Christian	CFR1	PhD	X	
Rose	Christian	CRF2	Admin	X	X
Bernad	Christian	CFR3	Cathedral		X
Anna	Sikh	JFR1	CIP	X	
Harbinda	Jewish	SFR1	PhD		X
Trina	Teacher AR1	ST1	Teacher	X	X
Alize	Teacher AR2	ST2	Teacher	X	X
Charlie	Teacher AR3	ST3	Teacher	X	X



## APPENDIX J: RULES FOR DIALOGUE

### Guidelines for Dialogue...

- 1) **Respect** other viewpoints even if you disagree.
- 2) Be **honest** about what you say and **explain** why.
- 3) Speak **positively** about what you think rather than **negatively** about what someone else thinks.
- 4) Look out for **similarities** and **differences**.
- 5) Make every **effort** to get along with everyone.
- 6) If you feel uncomfortable you can say "**stop**" and we will stop.



## APPENDIX K: ICC SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

The Story Tent - July 2015 - Key Intercultural Attitudes and Skills  
(Selected from Council of Europe recommendations 2008 and Byram 1997)

### Key ICC Attitudes:

Respect



Openness

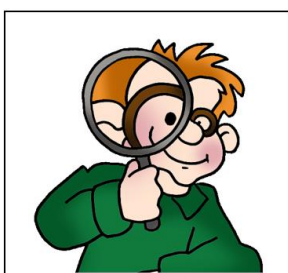


Curious

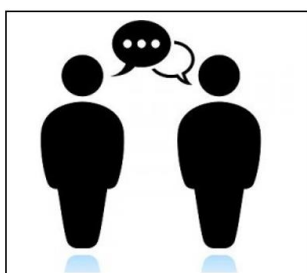


### Key ICC Skills:

Discover



Interpret



Relate



## APPENDIX L: ETHICAL APPROVAL

## Application for Ethical Approval for Research Degrees

(MA by research, MPhil/PhD, EdD)



Student number: 0856661

Student name: Anne Moseley

PhD  EdD  MA by research

Project title:

An investigation into the potential use of dialogue around sacred texts and faith stories, to help children to develop civic minded attitudes in primary school.

Supervisor: Dr Julia Igrave

Funding body (if relevant): Hockerill Education Foundation and Culham St Gabriel.

Please ensure you have read the Guidance for the Ethical Conduct of Research available in the handbook.

### Methodology

Please outline the methodology, e.g. observation, individual interviews, focus groups, group testing etc.

The study involves a two part process. An initial phase exploring teaching practice across different primary schools and the way sacred texts are currently being used. This will be completed through the use of questionnaires for teachers, viewing of schemes of work, lesson plans, children's work, observations and teacher interviews in a smaller mixed sample of schools identified as a result of the questionnaires. (Ethical approval has been completed and approved in 2013) This phase is now completed and ethical approval is now being sought on the second phase of research. This phase will be based on Action Research methodology and will investigate the impact of an RE intervention based on a solid theoretical background

and experience gained from my initial explorations. Methods used in his second phase will consist of class questionnaires, individual interviews with children using the semi-structured AIE interview, participant journals from teachers and analysis of the work produced during the intervention.

### **Participants**

Please specify all participants in the research including ages of children and young people where appropriate. Also specify if any participants are vulnerable e.g. children; as a result of learning disability.

Three schools will participate in the second phase of research. In each of the schools class teachers, upper key stage two pupils and faith representatives from local communities will participate.

### **Respect for participants' rights and dignity**

How will the fundamental rights and dignity of participants be respected, e.g. confidentiality, respect of cultural and religious values?

At the start of each intervention the importance of respecting difference will be explicitly incorporated into the teaching material.

Pupil involvement in the questionnaires will be optional.

At the interview stage, an information sheet for participants will be talked through regarding the nature of the interview and pupils will be given the option of whether or not they wish to be recorded. (I will explain at the start of each interview that if they feel uncomfortable at any time they can indicate that they do not want to answer the question or at any time they say they wish to stop.)

### **Privacy and confidentiality**

How will confidentiality be assured? Please address all aspects of research including protection of data records, thesis, reports/papers that might arise from the study.

The questionnaires will be anonymous and kept securely.

Code letters and numbers will be used to refer to responses in all written work.

All reference to participants will be anonymous and pseudonyms will be used in all written records of the interview. Coding information will be kept securely and separate from the original data.

The recording will be stored securely and destroyed after 10 years in accordance with the University of Warwick's data protection policy.

### **Consent**

How will prior informed consent be obtained from the following?

#### **From participants:**

Teachers and faith representatives will be given an outline of the intervention in advance and verbal consent will be gained through discussion of expectations from both sides. The formality of written consent would be intrusive and impact the quality of relationships between the researcher and participants. The informality of verbal consent maintains a more balanced, equal and reciprocal relationship, typical of those expected in action research projects.

Pupil questionnaires will be presented in class time and will be optional, consent will be asked for on the day.

Each pupil will be asked for consent before the recording of interviews. (If children prefer not to be recorded a written account will be completed immediately after the interview.)

#### **From others:**

An abstract of the research will be given to the head-teacher at each of the schools and written consent will be gained in advance of the intervention taking place.

Advice will be sought from each head-teacher about whether written consent should be gained from the parents of the pupils taking part in the interviews.

Due to the sensitive nature of dealing with Islamic issues and particularly the use of the Qur'an in schools a letter will be sent out to parents explaining the aims of the day.

If prior informed consent is not to be obtained, give reason:

NA

Will participants be explicitly informed of the student's status?

Adults will be fully aware, pupils will not.

### **Competence**

How will you ensure that all methods used are undertaken with the necessary competence?

A structured interview "The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters", produced by the Council of Europe, will be used alongside the format of the questionnaire. Questionnaires will be based on the structure of the AIE in order to provide triangulation and rigour to the results.

#### **Protection of participants**

How will participants' safety and well-being be safeguarded?

Participants will have the opportunity to provide as much information as they feel comfortable with whilst being able to stop at any point. Questionnaires and interviews will be anonymous and responses coded, any reference to interviews will use pseudonyms.

#### **Child protection**

Will a CRB check be needed? Yes No  (If , please attach a copy.)

#### **Addressing dilemmas**

Even well planned research can produce ethical dilemmas. How will you address any ethical dilemmas that may arise in your research?

If ethical dilemmas occur during my research I will ensure I seek advice from my supervisor as soon as possible and will indicate to the participant my concern and assurance that I will get back to them as soon as possible with the resolution to the problem.

#### **Misuse of research**

How will you seek to ensure that the research and the evidence resulting from it are not misused?

Secure storage of data

Accurate reporting of data

All references remain anonymous

All publications properly referenced

**Support for research participants**

What action is proposed if sensitive issues are raised or a participant becomes upset?

Adult participants will be given my Warwick email contact and the email contact of my supervisor as a means of communicating any concerns.

Participants will be given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any stage.

**Integrity**

How will you ensure that your research and its reporting are honest, fair and respectful to others?

Secure storage of data

Accurate reporting of data

All references remain anonymous

All publications properly referenced

What agreement has been made for the attribution of authorship by yourself and your supervisor(s) of any reports or publications?

Authorship of any published work involved in this research will be discussed in advance with my supervisor.

**Other issues**

Please specify other issues not discussed above, if any, and how you will address them.

<b>Signed:</b>	
Student: <i>Anne Moseley</i>	Date: 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2015
Supervisor:	Date:

Please submit this form to the Research Office (Andy Brierley, room WE133)

Office use only

Action taken:

- Approved
- Approved with modification or conditions – see below
- Action deferred. Please supply additional information or clarification – see below

Name: *Michael Hammond*  
Signature: *MICHAEL HAMMOND*  
Date: *10 OCTOBER 2016*

Stamped:

Notes of Action: